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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

SECOND QUARTER - 1958

Special Issue on The Bible in The Roman Catholic Church

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Editorial

IT IS SOME TIME SINCE this BULLETIN reported at any length on the place of the Bible in Roman Catholicism. During the intervening period enquiries on the subject have frequently reached the U.B.S. office and gradually fresh material has accumulated. For some time we have been considering bringing before our readers additional information about the history, background and trends of the biblical movement in the Roman Catholic Church, and we are glad now to be able to do so.

That such a movement exists is widely known. The difficulty consists in ascertaining its precise nature and scope. Data and other relevant material on the Bible in the Roman Catholic Church are scattered in books and periodicals. In carrying out our enquiry we have not succeeded in finding any information in a form that was both condensed and comprehensive. It is in French publications that we have found the most extensive treatment of the various aspects of the subject, whilst material in German, English, Spanish or Dutch appeared extremely scanty. It is also interesting to note from book reviews in French or other periodicals, how much more seems to appear in French on the Bible itself and matters related to it, than in any other language at the present time. From this it is clear that not only was French-speaking Catholicism one of the promoters, historically speaking, of the whole biblical movement in the Roman Church, but that it is still to-day the spearhead of the movement.

In any discussion about the place of the Bible in the Roman Catholic Church, things have to be kept in perspective. Though world-wide in its geographical outreach, the modern biblical movement has not yet become a landslide. It has not yet penetrated very deeply into the masses of the Roman Catholic Church, except perhaps in France and Belgium, where large sections of the intellectual middle-classes and a number of the industrial workers have been touched.

Yet the Bible is on the move in the Roman Catholic Church. But not only the Bible. Its rediscovery is only part, though undoubtedly essential, of a wider and many-sided movement within the Roman Catholic Church. This is fortunate in a way, because it means that the Bible can influence the whole evolution in the Church. On the other hand its aims might become blurred by other issues not directly relevant, and the future of the movement jeopardized.

Finally, however striking the renewal of interest in the Bible in Roman Catholic circles may appear, one cannot overlook the fact that the position of the Church in relation to the question of the authority of the Scripture and of its interpretation has not changed fundamentally. The Holy Writ is part of the Church's Tradition, which is given to it by the action of the Holy Spirit. Roman

Catholic teaching considers that although the full revelation is contained in the Bible, it nevertheless occurs there sometimes only in embryonic form. The Church may still, therefore, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, evolve new dogmas from such doctrinal scriptural "embryos" and introduce them into the body of its doctrine. (This is the key to the biblical argument about the new Mary dogmas.) That same body of doctrine is also paramount in all matters of interpretation and sets its limits to the individual study and use of the Holy Word. It is therefore important in any attempt to assess the Bible movement in the Roman Catholic Church, to keep in mind the qualifications which such an attitude implies for its character and general scope.

In face of the developments described in this BULLETIN, the question naturally arises for people connected with the work of the Bible Societies: How does all this affect us? What is our attitude? Every friend of the Bible will, of course, rejoice at the effort made by many to restore the Holy Scripture to a central place in the life of the Roman Catholic Church and of its members. He will rejoice at the many good translations produced and at the quality of many of the Bible commentaries and books published now about the Bible. He will rejoice at the efforts (still too infrequent!) of some to produce attractive and relatively cheap editions of the Scripture for wide circulation. He will also rejoice at the objectivity and moderation of the notes which are introduced in all Roman Catholic editions and of the modern commentaries which no longer show signs of the aggressive attitude which was formerly all too evident.

At the same time, however, we can forget neither the obvious limitations already referred to, nor the extensive opposition, prejudice, ignorance which the movement has still to overcome. Though understanding the logic of the position we regret that the interpretation of the scriptural witness should still be considered as subject to the acceptance of the doctrine of faith as held by the Church and not the reverse. And we are as concerned at the evident (probably consequent) widespread reluctance to use the printed Word as an instrument of evangelism among those who have lost contact with the Church or have not yet been evangelised. This is the point where we believe there is a real weakness in the Roman Catholic position, in not recognising that, through God's written Word alone, the Holy Spirit can move people out of their unbelief and their sin and bring them to the Lord's feet, as has been witnessed in the work of the Bible Societies and what they stand for.

This explains why, although general encouragement is given to lay people almost everywhere to possess the Gospels or the New Testament or the whole Bible, no laxity has been shown officially with regard to Bible Society editions of the Scriptures. Only approved and annotated editions are authorised and "Protestant" Bibles are on the whole still warned against, forbidden or even destroyed.

But the actuality of the biblical movement in the Roman Catholic Church may also have some direct relevance for the work of the Bible Societies. It may, for instance, induce some people, unintentionally, to disregard the Roman Catholic Church's rejection of the "Protestant" Bibles and to buy Bible Society editions, and in this way increase the world demand for Bible Society publications.

The question may also arise in the mind of some—as it has indeed already done—whether the Bible Societies, which have always circulated some Roman Catholic translations, ought to contemplate co-operating—on terms which still need defining—with the exponents of the biblical movement. (An attempt of this kind made by the B.F.B.S. less than a decade ago with Dr. Parsch in Austria failed at the last minute when the Austrian partner had to break off the conversations.) Again, in view of the fact that non-Roman and Roman scholars already meet for archeological, critical and exegetical studies related to the Bible, one might wonder whether, in matters of translation, some similar co-operation might not be envisaged or achieved, as has been possible with Orthodox scholars, thus producing better translations acceptable to all.

What we are concerned with is the wider circulation of the Word of God in the best translations possible. If, on some points, our aims and those of the biblical movement appear to converge, the Bible Societies, which disclaim any denominational or confessional stamp on their work, cannot but rejoice and be ready to be open to anything which could still further improve the quality and efficacy of their own work.

And even if no avenue to practical co-operation can be found, at least the way of intercession remains open. And it would be fitting for friends of the Bible for those who believe in its converting power to include in their prayer for the work of the Bible Societies petitions for the biblical movement in the Roman Catholic Church. All we can ask is that their labours, like ours, may help man to come closer to his Master and thus serve to the glory and the furtherance of the kingdom of our common Lord.

O.B.

The Biblical Movement in the Roman Catholic Church

Quotations and factual information collated and introduced by

Olivier Béguin

ROMAN CATHOLIC HISTORIANS trace the decline of the Bible movement in that Church back to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. The individualistic and anthropocentric influences, which triumped at the Renaissance, were already beginning to undermine the Bible-centred faith of the Christians of those days. The internal corruption in the Church, the invasion of theological thinking by philosophical theories, only quickened the process of disintegration. As Dom C. Charlier, one of the prominent figures of the modern Roman Catholic biblical movement puts it, in his book *La lecture chrétienne de la Bible* (Christian reading of the Bible): "When the Protestant crisis occurred, the Bible had ceased to be what it had been in the Church until the thirteenth century, in the living framework of the liturgy: almost the sole source of its prayer, of its thought and of its inspiration". (p.4)

For three centuries the ordinary Christian was to be deprived, with few exceptions, of any direct access to the text of Scripture. He was to hear it in Latin during the celebration of the mass. He was hardly able to discern it under the hazy allegorical homilies of his priests, themselves nourished on the works of "the multitude—hundreds of them—of conscientious interpreters, more informed in the traditional knowledge of the Fathers than sensitive to the demands of literary and historical objectivity" (G. Auzou, *La Parole de Dieu*, p.115). Meanwhile, "heretic" Bibles in the vernacular were burned, denounced in all kinds of papal and other proclamations and forbidden, and the Bible Societies were publicly and officially indicted in various encyclicals, syllabuses, letters and statements. (Leo XII, Gregory XVI, Pius IX, Leo XIII.)

The initiative taken by the hierarchy

However, when knowledge of the great archeological discoveries of the nineteenth century began to spread, when the works of the critical and historical school in Germany became known, when readers were confronted by ultra-modernist books like those on the life of Jesus by Strauss or Renan, then a new interest in the Bible began to arise. One was reminded that the Bible was more than a collection of edifying stories, inspiring moral examples, striking expressions and illustrations. Indeed, one was led to recognise that the Bible was more basically related to the Church and its life than had been assumed, and it became ominously clear that if the Bible was to be "wrecked" by the attacks of the critics, it was the Church itself and the faith of its children which were in danger.

And so, in France, it soon appeared—to some at least—that a conservative attitude of ignoring all such developments and the questions they raised in the minds of many believers, would quickly become untenable. In 1890 Père Lagrange and a few other Dominicans founded the Ecole biblique de Jérusalem, trying to bring to biblical exegesis a sound historical approach. They met with much incomprehension and opposition, intensified a decade later by the condemnation and excommunication of Abbot Loisy, who had denied the historical reality of Christ's resurrection, seeing in it only a symbolic truth for the faith. With courage and tenacity the team continued its work, launching its now famous Biblical Review, continuing its series of biblical studies and latterly taking a leading part in the recent archeological research and studies, particularly in relation to the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as bringing to completion, not long ago, the well-known 'Bible de Jérusalem', the most outstanding modern translation of the Scriptures in French.

The efforts of Père Lagrange and his associates, and their influence over countless Roman Catholic exegetists and scholars were greatly strengthened by the support given, indirectly, on various occasions by papal pronouncements. In 1893 Pope Leo XIII, in his Providentissimus Deus Encyclical—the cornerstone of the modern biblical movement in the Roman Catholic church—encouraged Roman Catholic theologians to face squarely the thesis of the critical liberal school of criticism. The Encyclical recommends the selection and training of competent teachers in seminaries and schools; it gives instructions regarding graded courses of studies, the principles of textual studies and interpretation, the use of the writings of the Fathers, the defence of the authority of the Holy Scriptures and their inerrancy. To keep a watch on the studies, give advice and make authoritative decisions on questions submitted, Leo XIII founded, a few years later (1902), the Pontifical Biblical Commission (which denounced Loisy). His successor, Pius X, went a step further. He began by instituting in 1904 an academic degree in Sacred Scripture, to be conferred by the Biblical Commission. Two years later the letter "Quoniam in Re Biblica" defined the method of Scripture study in the seminaries. In 1907 a decree stated that the decisions of the Biblical Commission approved by the Pope were binding on the conscience. Again two years later, Pius X founded the Pontifical Biblical Institute entrusted to the Jesuits, which he desired "should provide courses of higher study and be equipped with all the apparatus of biblical erudition", in order "to promote biblical learning and subsidiary sciences as effectively as possible and in accordance with the Spirit of the Catholic Church". At the same time, the Benedictine monks had been entrusted with studies and research preparatory to a revision of the Vulgate, a work which actually started in 1933 when the Monastery of St. Jerome in Rome was founded and endowed for that purpose.

In 1920 Benedict XV issued his Encyclical "Spiritus Paraclitus", celebrating the 1,500th anniversary of St. Jerome's death and encouraging the reading and study of the Scriptures and simple biblical expository preaching, free from unnecessary rhetorical niceties, on the part of the priests. A later decree laid down that no one should be appointed Professor of Sacred Scripture in any seminary until he has the requisite academic degrees.

The climax of this development was marked by the publication in 1943 of the Encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu". There Pius XII (the present Pope) reviews the developments that have taken place in the last fifty years, since the publication of Providentissimus Deus, and emphasizes the importance of textual

criticism of the Scriptures in the original languages. The inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible is again stated and the ways of study and interpretation are defined. The critical approach and the faith, the letter and the spirit, must no longer be regarded as in opposition to one another. The deeper one goes into the knowledge of the text and of its literal meaning, the closer one comes to a real understanding of the Word of God. "The sacred pages themselves, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are themselves rich in original meaning; endowed with divine power, they have their own value...." (Div. Aff. § 29). In matters of translation, the Encyclical recalls that the Council of Trent did not forbid "the making of translations into the vernacular, even directly from the original texts themselves, for the use and benefit of the faithful and for the better understanding of the Word of God...." (§ 22). Indeed, the Bishops themselves are called upon to "recommend efficaciously, by word and example, the Sacred Scriptures translated with the approval of ecclesiastic authority into modern languages, whenever the liturgical laws permit". (§ 51).

Parallel to this effort on the part of the hierarchy of the Church to encourage and direct the clerics in their return to the Bible and their desire to understand and interpret correctly the sacred texts, one can trace in the Roman church an increasing tendency to encourage the laity in the reading and understanding, if not of the whole Bible, at least of the New Testament or the Gospels and Acts.

The same Leo XIII, the last to condemn the work of the Bible Societies as late as 1897, the following year granted "to all the faithful who shall devoutly read the Scriptures for at least a quarter of an hour a day, an indulgence of three hundred days, provided that the edition of the Gospel has been approved by legitimate authority...." and "a plenary indulgence to all those who shall have read in this way every day of the month". Leo's successor, Pius X, went even one step further. Before his enthronement he himself, as Patriarch of Venice, had seen through the production of a popular edition of 5,000 copies of the New Testament in Italian. In a letter (1907) to Cardinal Casetta, the protector of the St. Jerome Society (whose aim is "the distribution of the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in such a way that these books have their place in future in every Christian family and everyone makes a habit of reading and meditating on them every day") the Pope pointed to the necessity "to abolish the idea that the Church is opposed to or puts obstacles in the way of the reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular" and expressed his joy that already half a million Italian Scriptures had been circulated under the auspices of the Society.

Again in his "Spiritus Paraclitus", Benedict XV exhorted "all the children of the Church....to venerate the Sacred Scriptures, to read them devoutly and meditate upon them with perseverence". "We.... shall never desist", he added "from encouraging the faithful in the daily reading of the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles, so as to gather there food for their souls".

In similar words, Pius XII, in the 1943 Encyclical, encouraged the Bishops to "favour and assist those pious associations whose object is to spread copies of the sacred writings, especially of the Gospels, among the faithful and to ensure by every means possible that in Christian families the same be read daily with piety and devotion". (§ 51)

It is not surprising therefore that under such strong encouragement from the Holy See itself and with the development of biblical studies among Roman Catholic scholars and clergy, a new era seems to have begun in the history of

Roman Catholic piety. Translations, commentaries, books on the Bible, appear in quick succession in different countries. Bible weeks, Bible week-ends, Bible days, Bible camps, take place locally or nationally. Bible study groups are being formed in increasing numbers. The enthusiasm had to be somewhat damped down so much so that in 1950, in the Encyclical "Humani Generis", the same Pope, Pius XII, whose encyclical "Divino Afflante" had been so decisive for the biblical movement, felt obliged to warn against some dangerous aspects of interpreting the Holy Scriptures "in a purely human way" and not "according to the spirit of the Church which our Lord Jesus Christ has made guardian and interpreter of the divine truth, as revealed by God", thus endangering "the truth of the faith and of the Catholic doctrine".

More recently, in 1955, an instruction was sent out by the papal biblical commission prescribing, with the authorisation and approval of the Holy See, that any Bible study circle or group of a permanent and public nature be subject to episcopal authorisation and placed under episcopal jurisdiction, and under the direction of a competent chaplain. Bible weeks or days open to the general public also require approval by the Bishop and the summing up made by the chairman must be sent to the secretary of the papal biblical commission. The instruction concludes with an appeal to the Bishops to follow the matter closely, also checking over related books and articles published or in preparation.

The aspirations of the laity

One should not read more into such instructions than they really contain. They do not ring the knell of the biblical movement. But they are a call to order. In a Roman Catholic perspective nothing could be more legitimate. For the need of the Church authorities to-day is less to encourage a new movement, than to make sure it does not get out of control.

For the biblical movement in the Roman Catholic Church is not an artificial movement imposed from above. Its very success is a sign of the intense pressure which has developed from below. In sociological terms one could say that we witness a democratic upsurge of the "laos"—the people of the church who want to get hold of the riches which so far were only the privilege of the clergy; an immediate relation to the Truth instead of mediated contacts. The declarations made by the hierarchy have encouraged the movement and have at the same time helped to channel it in the right direction.

It is significant that several leaders of the biblical movement discovered the value of the Bible reading in P.O.W. camps or while serving as chaplains in fighting units during the first or second world wars. In the French-speaking areas it is the Roman Catholic youth movements—workers as well as students—which were one of the mainsprings of biblical interest in the thirties.

Roman Catholic historians writing on the subject also have no hesitation in recognising the influence of Protestant exegesis and biblical scholarship on the Roman Catholic movement of rediscovery of the Bible. Barth, Cullmann, Suzanne de Diétrich, are frequently named. But special reference is generally made to the influence of lay people: of a poet like Paul Claudel, for instance, whose work to a great extent is inspired and nourished by the Scriptures, is written in biblical style and borrows many of its illustrations and much of its symbolism from the Bible. Or a novelist like Daniel Rops who in 1943 published

a Sacred History, "a book which was timely but not dated and whose appearance was undoubtedly providential. Of course, one could qualify one's admiration and appreciation. The fact remains, however, that this is a book which has made a 'hit' in an extraordinary and pointed way, which continues to arouse countless people to the significance of the Bible and helping them in their reading of it". (*La Parole de Dieu*, Auzou, 151)

As Dom C. Charlier also puts it: "Thus we are witnessing a strange return of laymen to the Bible. It is still a quite small élite : particularly men of letters, at least in France. Great poets like Péguy, Claudel or Milosz, writers like Denys Gorce, Madeleine Chasles, Hubert Colleye, Stanislas Fumet or Jacques Maritain—to mention only the most well known—have found a large audience when they have preached the return to the Bible, and it is sufficient to note the success of the latest books of Daniel Rops to realise to what extent they respond to a spiritual need.

"Some particularly open-minded theologians, impressed by this movement, have taken account now of the obligation incumbent upon them of leading it. Many revues, acting as the voice of one or other of the large orders, keep their readers informed of the progress of the movement and publish attempts at biblical interpretation or recent revisions of the text. A campaign is being worked out; it is still seeking its real direction, but is already assessing the scope of its field of action". (*Lecture Chrétienne de la Bible*, p.16)

Georges Auzou sums up the present situation in the following way: "We are witnessing now a rapid return to the Bible. In order to see evidence of this it is only necessary to note: Before 1945 copies of the Bible were only to be found in the hands of the priests, of scholars and of certain individuals of some originality or of a rare grace. To-day the Bible is to be found everywhere, in some degree. Four translations have appeared within a few years: those of Maredsous, of Lille, the new Crampon and the Jerusalem Bible. Formerly a Catholic bookshop, even one that was well-stocked, had scarcely a Bible in the shop; this would not be excused nowadays. One would also find there at the present time a quantity of works about the Bible, and quite recent ones at that. If one enters a church one sees new signs: new copies of the Missals for the faithful, which claim to be and are inspired by the Bible in the way in which they are presented as in the commentaries included in them; the text—from Psalms, Prophets, Epistles, Gospels—is from new translations, done with great care; one hears it read aloud. The hymns too have been revised, usually in line with the Bible revision. Similarly the preaching and teaching in the Church to-day is beginning to feel the effects of the movement which is affecting all members of the Church. One feels the urgency of the Holy Spirit in this return to the source". (*La Parole de Dieu*, p.149)

How to read the Bible

"In order to launch a Bible movement, it is not sufficient", writes Father Bouyer, a former Protestant pastor and a pioneer in the biblical movement, "to distribute Bibles to Catholics as one feeds hot buns to the animals at the zoo...." "Are Catholics to whom Bibles are distributed with such a sudden frenzy able to read them with profit? Some are afraid they will only get from it the most absurd irrelevancies. We would rather fear that they would get very little at all out of it, and that they would soon put it on one side. Sealed yesterday by the one seal of ignorance, it might well to-morrow be sealed by the sevenfold

seal of boredom and incomprehension.... We must accept the fact that there is no 'short cut' to the understanding of the Bible and to making it understood by others. The Bible will never be taught 'without tears' or 'in twelve lessons', like water-skiing or yoga. It is not through any method, either complex or easy, nor even through a science, academic or abstract, that the reader can be introduced to the world of the Bible. It is only through a process of growth, of slow apprehension, which the spirit as well as the intellect agree to undergo". (*Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 13, 1956)

And this is qualified by Georges Auzou:—

"One must hasten to add that the demands imposed are not terrible; they are most reasonable and more modest and more limited than might appear. The Bible is not written primarily for specialists and professors, it is not an area reserved for scholars, still less a museum of rare species for the inquisitive, nor yet an opportunity for exercise on the part of those of rare intelligence. It is the book of God's people; they can normally have access to it, not without effort, but with effort proportionate to what they gain from it.

"....One often has occasion to meet in the sacred text a word whose biblical meaning helps one to grasp the essence of what is referred to—the word 'connaître' (to know) for example. In Hebrew this word means not only what its French equivalent at once conveys, but also means 'épouser' (to marry). It is like going to the depths of the reality 'known' in one's heart, to enter into contact with it and live with it, to become profoundly involved in and related to it, in faithfulness, and to discover its rich rewards.... It is to make oneself available for it, to allow oneself to be impressed and moved by this Voice (Psalm 95:7-8), by this divine revelation which is an action of God in man, by this Love which is grace.

"....To know the Bible is to live with it and from it, it is to live the Word of God within oneself. It therefore seems clear that the knowledge of the Bible is something of extraordinary importance for every man of faith; his mental balance, the path he takes in life, may be affected by it and modified by it quite radically. Rather than speaking of a 'study' of the Bible therefore, one can and ought rather to speak of 'biblical life'. And this life, like the whole of life, is by its nature expansive—its tendency is to communicate itself. When the follower of the Bible has 'digested' or 'consumed' his Bible well, it will make him its messenger, becoming part of his faith, which is life-giving for the world (John 20:31); he will take the Good News everywhere he can (Mark 16:15), the Good News without which the world dies of hunger (Amos 8:11-14)". (*La Parole de Dieu*, pp. 17, 22-23).

The Bible and the Church

The two passages quoted in the previous section are quite remarkable in many ways. However, they have to be read against the background of the general attitude regarding the relation of the Bible to the Church, if we are to realise the extent of their significance in a Roman Catholic perspective. This reading and study of the Bible may not take place outside of the Church, outside of the tradition of the Church. All the leaders of the biblical movement insist on this again and again. "It is not from the written Word as such, and as direct communication, that the faithful can ask to know the content of his faith:

it is from the living tradition of the Church of the day, which is infallibly supported by the Spirit...." writes Dom Charlier (in *La lecture chrétienne de la Bible* p.27). "....For anyone who wants to understand the Bible correctly, it is important not to cut it off from the whole of tradition, which is ever-living, ever one though manifold, in God's people, in Christ's body, which is the Church. What is born from that mother cannot be understood without her....", concurs Father Boyer (*Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 1, 1953, p.15). "....In order to find the Word of God in the Bible—the living Word which is Jesus Christ Himself—in order to find the Gospel, 'the good news of salvation' in the Gospels, one must, as the Fathers say, 'se faire une âme ecclésiastique' (i.e. become a member of the Church). One must read the Bible within the Church...." (*id.*, p.19)

"For it is primarily", writes Dom C. Butler, Abbot of Downside (Gregorian) Monastery (England), "upon the Church that the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit has been conferred. And it is only by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that the inspired word can be understood as such. The Scriptures are not *of private interpretation*. It is ultimately for the Church to discern, and to declare with authority, the spiritual meaning of Scripture, its meaning for faith —to determine, for instance, that *This is my body* is not a mere rhetorical figure but a statement of true, though mysterious, fact. Individual members of the Church share in the Church's mind and in her indwelling by the Holy Spirit, and their own reading and understanding of Scripture may be valid so far as they do not contradict the Church's interpretation...." (*Downside Review*, Spring 1957, p.119)

A similar consideration appears, in different terms, from the pen of a German Roman Catholic professor, F. Richter, who also shows some direct implications of that view:

"The Holy Scripture cannot be the sole source of belief. For it is so indissolubly bound up with tradition and anchored to it, that the latter came into the picture as a second source of belief quite on its own account. The indissoluble connection between Holy Scripture and tradition is evident, both in the growth of the individual books of the Bible and in the development of the general canons, and is seen constantly in the exposition of the Scripture. To tradition belongs also the formation of belief and the increasing consciousness of the faith of the Church in the worship of God to-day. More recent theological research maintains, with some justification, that a great number of statements of faith of the Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, are the outcome of devotion on the part of the Church and a further development of earlier statements of faith. Such a process can also take place in the Church, and is seen most clearly in the development of the Marian dogma. This is legitimate when it is in harmony with the original statement of faith and the new statements of faith at least exist in embryo in the ancient statements. The authority of the Scriptures is of fundamental significance in the examination of this connection. To this extent, the Scripture is *regula fidei*, which can never be violated. But is is not necessary that every statement of faith, of church tradition and every testimony in the Roman Catholic faith should be stated explicitly through the Scripture. It is sufficient that it is either contained implicitly in it, or at any rate that there is no inner contradiction to it, and that it corresponds to a faithful analogy of the Catholic faith. The decision about it lies with those responsible for the Church's teaching. In the Roman Catholic Church it is not only the Scriptures but also the tradition maintained through the ecclesiastical authorities—as also the

Church's consciousness of its faith as expressed in the liturgy—that are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and therefore, in the same way, are equally authoritative because they are in harmony with one another, but nevertheless have their full value only in the inter-relation of the one with the other". (*Bibel und Kirche*, No. 3, 1956, p.76)

The reference to Mary clearly points to the limits of the biblical movement and the undeniable embarrassment which overcame the promoters of the movement when the dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin was proclaimed. *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, one of the leading periodicals of the French-speaking biblical movement, and from which we have been and shall be quoting in several places, devoted a whole issue to "The Bride and the Word" (the biblical basis of Mariology) in 1954. All the leaders of the movement writing in that issue were at pains to look at the few passages referring to Mary as through a magnifying glass, and to build up the biblical case—or so it would seem to a non-Roman Catholic—for the special honours bestowed on Mary in Roman Catholicism.

However, it would be unjust to the movement to refuse to see, because of such limitations, how central the Bible has become in all their thinking: "No Bible outside the Church tradition", exclaims Dom Charlier; "yes but no tradition outside the Bible. Outside the Church, the letter is dead, but the Church, what can she endow with life, if not the letter?" (*La Lecture Chrétienne de la Bible*, p.271)

And the same author elaborates his views in an article entitled: "Is it necessary to read the Bible?", published a few years later in *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* (No. 6, pp.13-15):

"The Christian, in leaning, with the Church, on the first divine evidences of his salvation, learns to find there direct contact with God, not only at the entry of revelation into history, but again in the thread of his own personal life, for the mysterious force of this divine contact is in some way crystallised in the letter of the Scriptures. To make the letter spring to life again, like a fresh and living fountain, in order to experience the shock of regeneration, the only requirement is to recapture the Spirit which has concealed it in the Book and which the Church does not cease to mete out to him who believes. On this plane, of complete Christian life, nothing can take the place of this enlightening action of the Scripture, for it is the Scripture alone which contains, which truly is, the inscription of the Word of God for the use of men; it alone has recorded the pulsation of His Spirit. In order to read this inscription it is indispensable to learn the alphabet of the faith under the guidance of the Church; to awaken that pulsation it is necessary to receive from the Church the Spirit which is watchful behind the letter. But no other book has preserved the echo of God's voice in this way, no other has preserved in this way His own accent or His living heartbeat....

"Is there any need, therefore, to stress further the fact that the Church of God cannot recognise and does not recognise in any book, whatever it is, or in any other human word whatever its authority, a comparable grasp of the mind of God, any more than it accords to any sacred gesture the efficacity of grace reserved for the sacraments?

"Tradition itself only preserves the Spirit, it does not introduce it. Through the infallible help of this Spirit which is promised to it, the Church itself is assured of remaining faithful to the initial and initiating inspiration of revelation,

but it is never entitled to add anything whatsoever to the message received in trust. Only scriptural revelation has the direct and true power of revelation, active and positive. The writings of the Fathers, the works of the saints, the revelations of the mystics, even the definitions of councils or of the popes do not enjoy and never will enjoy this unique privilege. On the doctrinal plane, the Church has the Holy Spirit at its disposal only so that she may transmit, translate, explain or specify authentically the message of God, and not in order to add to it, even by a letter: *not an iota of the Scripture will be without fulfilment*...."

Bible and Liturgy

When dealing with the biblical movement in the Roman Catholic Church, none can escape noticing how closely related it is to the liturgical movement which runs parallel to it in the Church of Rome. (Indeed, one can notice a similar phenomenon in the non-Roman churches, particularly amongst Lutherans and Reformed.) All through the history of the Roman Catholic Church the matter of the content of the liturgy has been discussed, and disputed, particularly with reference to the texts dealing with the Virgin Mary's life and the lives of the saints. It is only towards the end of the 19th century that the Roman Catholic liturgy was unified throughout the world, largely under the influence of people like Dom Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes.

However, this did not put an end to the problems. Another was already arising: Was the Office to be held perpetually in Latin, with the probability that it would not be understood by lay people, or even by the poorly-educated priests? As late as 1857, Leo XIII had prohibited the translation of the Ordinary of the Mass into the vernacular. Forty years later the prohibition was revoked and the use of the missal began to spread among the laity. But there were many objections, and the belief in the essential "mystery" of the Mass, which was enhanced by the use of Latin, only slowly began to give way to an emphasis on the idea of communal worship. As a consequence the people were invited to participate and co-operate in the service and there was pressure for greater use of the vernacular.

On this point the present Pope established an important landmark by his encyclical of November, 1947, "Mediator Dei", in which he encourages and orientates the liturgical renewal, just as a few years previously he had supported the biblical movement in his "Afflante Spiritu". "It is very important above all" writes Pius XII, referring to the more advanced tendencies in the liturgical movement, "that Christians live the liturgical life and increase and cherish its supernatural spirit". Though not by any means rejecting the use of Latin, the Pope suggests, however, that "the use of the mother tongue in connection with several of the rites may be of much advantage to the people".

It is this concern for the needs of the people, for their better understanding of the liturgy and much more for their fuller participation, which has led in more recent years to a remarkable increase in the use of the vernacular in the celebration of the mass. Not only have countless editions of liturgical devotional books, missals in diglot form or even in the vernacular been published in many different languages, but also in many French-speaking dioceses, for instance, it is prescribed or at least advised that two priests should read the mass simultaneously, one in Latin and one in the vernacular. In several other countries the vernacular is used to-day in some degree in the rituals. And even recently in Britain the Easter mass was celebrated for the first time in English.

Such manifestations, however, are still the extreme expression of an intensive as well as an extensive effort to restore the dignity of the liturgy, to revive it and to get all worshippers to understand better what is going on in public worship and to take a direct share in it. In all parts of the world, regional, national and international 'liturgical congresses' (particularly the International Congress in Lugano in 1953) are organised and the recommendations which emerge from such gatherings are unanimous in recommending measures which would help to bring about an intelligent and active participation, both inwardly and externally, on the part of the lay people in the public worship of the Church. When one remembers that the text of the liturgy consists now, primarily, of excerpts from the Scriptures, one sees from that side also how closely related to the rediscovery of the Bible this liturgical movement is. "Like every other movement of reform within the Church", writes Dom H. McCabe in *The Blackfriars Review*, February, 1957, "it (the liturgical revival) has been a return to the sacred Scriptures". And Cardinal Lercaro,* one of the leading participants in the Lugano Conference on Liturgy, said in a paper given there: "If the family of God in its liturgical assemblies could hear the Word of God in their own mother tongue, directly and immediately from the mouth of the minister empowered with authority to communicate it, the participation so much desired by the Holy Pontiff (Pius X) would seem to be more complete. He invited and succeeded in leading the faithful to participate in the liturgy of sacrifice by receiving the Eucharistic Bread; the direct use of the mother tongue for the Scripture readings would similarly enable them to take a more living and fruitful part in the liturgy of the Word of God by receiving the Word of God".

Indeed, the relation between the liturgical and the biblical movements goes deeper than the reading of the Scripture in the vernacular during worship. As fresh thought is given to the meaning of liturgy and new insights gained into the significance of the Bible, a new understanding of the profound and intimate relation of Bible and liturgy is emerging. For liturgy, in the thinking of many of the leaders of the movement, is more than just one part, or a secondary aspect of the life of the Church. "Liturgy is the most authentic framework of the total life of the Church", writes Dom C. Charlier. "It contains the quintessence of the early Fathers; it is permeated with biblical revelation. But its relation with the past is still a living one to-day; the liturgy makes the past present and perpetuates it, for it is not an artificial form; it is action. Liturgy expresses in action the faith and love of the Christian; sanctified by His spirit, it perpetuates in time the eternal mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God....

"In the liturgical act, the same Spirit which inspired the Bible and which continues to give life to the Church, nourishes the body of the Christian with the flesh itself of the Word incarnate, after having nourished his mind with His written Word. In the liturgical act also, the Church, the mystical body of Christ, finds itself in full communion with the mind of Christ as expressed in the Bible, through the participation of the Eucharist in the mysterious life of the resurrected Lord. The Bible is like the verbal body of Christ; the Eucharist communicates His physical body; the Church constitutes His social and mystical body". (*La Lecture Chrétienne de la Bible*, pp. 290 and 291)

In other words there is no true liturgy without the Bible; nor is there any real apprehension of the Word of God outside the liturgy, that corporate adoration, worship of and dialogue with the Lord, which embraces the receiving of the Word as well as of the Body in the community of believers.

* At present Archbishop of Bologna.

"The Bible is like the sacrament of the knowledge of God, whereas baptism, the eucharist and confirmation are the sacraments of His love. The Bible is the Word of God put into human language, this Word that He pronounces for the whole of eternity, this eternal Word which is made incarnate in Christ. The sacraments are the vehicles of His Spirit, and the source of the supernatural energy which causes the power of the Truth of the Word to spring forth within us". (C. Charlier, *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 6, p.11)

However, such advanced views, to be sure, have so far spread very little in the Church. "The liturgical movement which developed so strongly after the first world war found a much easier reception than the biblical movement that went hand in hand with it", writes Father N. W. Höslinger, of Klosterneuburg, one of the leading centres of the liturgical and biblical renewal. "Indeed we must say that the liturgical movement has come to a certain standstill because the carrying of it out and the inner understanding of the people are frequently frustrated on account of ignorance of the Bible, of its historical setting and of its unfamiliar language.... To-day more than ever the phrase is true: Through the Bible to the liturgy". (*Bibel und Liturgie*, 1957/58, No. 3, p.97)

This intimate relation between Scripture and liturgy is clearly brought out in the findings of the last congress of the 'Centre de Pastorale Liturgique' (centre of liturgical studies for the clergy). The theme of the congress was "Bible and Liturgy", "a choice which would have seemed perfectly incongruous ten years ago". The sub-titles alone are revealing: (1) No liturgy without the Bible; (2) The Church reads the Bible in the liturgical service; (3) The Church reads the whole Bible; (4) the whole Mass proclaims the Word of God; (5) Through the liturgy God speaks to-day; (6) The liturgy embodies to-day what the Bible proclaims; (7) the sacraments are biblical signs; (8) In spite of the increasing use of the missal it is with their ears that the faithful must listen to God's Word; (9) It is necessary that the faithful should understand the Word of God; (10) God has spoken in human language; (11) The Church responds to God through God's Word; (12) In the teaching of the faith to adolescents an effort is made to present the Bible through the liturgy; (13) The work of God's Word extends beyond the limits of the liturgical celebration. (*Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 20, 1958, p.117)

In a similar spirit, a North American Liturgical Conference held in 1956 recommended "that, for the benefit of the immense majority of the faithful whose only regular contact with the Holy Scripture consists in the reading of the lessons of the mass, the order of mass of the temporal liturgy (following the ecclesiastical year) be extended over a cycle of three or four years, thus allowing the faithful to improve their knowledge of and contact with the Old and the New Testaments". (Quoted in *Revista Biblica*, No. 85, 1957)

Bible and religious upbringing and education

The whole question of Christian upbringing and education has also received great attention in many quarters of the Church in recent years. Much thought has been given, in countries like France, Belgium, Germany, Holland and elsewhere, to the goal to be aimed at and the methods to be applied in Christian education. Everyone agrees that catechetical instruction is more than the intellectual teaching of doctrine. Spiritual education must not be overlooked. It is not enough that young people should know what the Christian doctrine is;

the Church needs members with a faith which grows out of their encounter with Jesus Christ, members who live as Christians in their modern surroundings and participate fully in the liturgical life of the Church.

In this far-reaching reorientation of the whole catechetical life, and in thinking out appropriate methods to be used to bring up and educate worthy members of the Church, the question of the place of the Bible in such education becomes central. The reader of the various works quoted so far will already have noticed how deeply concerned the leaders of the biblical movement are for the proper use of the Holy Scriptures in religious education and upbringing. A return to the Bible (and a revival of the liturgy as well) remains halting unless in the education of the Church members, potential or actual, the Bible is also restored to its rightful place.

Thus Dom Charlier recently devoted a whole article to the subject in one of the issues of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* (No. 12, 1956, p.7 onwards). He writes: "Is it necessary to justify the present return to the Scriptures in catechetical teaching, when one thinks of the essential and unique place which the written Word of God has held for long centuries in the traditional methods of the Church? Everyone knows that the preparation, both long-term and short-term, of catechumens, consisted essentially in the reading of the Scripture, in commenting on it and in bringing fresh life to this reading, as to the commentaries, by introducing them within the living framework of the sacramental life....

"Notwithstanding, for some centuries, especially since the Renaissance, this traditional method has been abandoned little by little. And to-day again the Bible takes practically no place in the teaching of most catechisms, in the constituent churches as in missionary areas. Certain diocesan catechisms up to thirty years ago still required a lesson on the Scriptures—admittedly a very short one, since it only contained two or three answers to questions, of which one was practically warning against the reading of the Bible; but one learned at least of the existence of the inspired Book and of its nature as the Word of God. At present, if I am not mistaken, this lesson has disappeared from most catechisms, notably from the new catechism imposed for the whole of France; in vain one glances through it, but finds that the Scriptures, particularly the Old Testament, are practically not mentioned. The same absence is to be noticed in most manuals, at least prior to the last ten years; and what can be said of the oral commentaries which ordinarily accompany the rare allusions to the Bible? We have all heard said on such an occasion that the reading of the Bible was not to be recommended, that it was the battle book of the Protestants and that special permission was needed for opening it.

"In the field of missionary activity a great biblical effort has certainly been attempted by certain special groups.... But can one believe that in missionary countries the Bible has experienced a progress comparable with that which it makes in Christendom, when one is obliged to acknowledge the disquieting silence which most missionary journals observe in relation to it, and the terrifying poverty of innumerable propaganda leaflets which so many missionary congregations distribute widely? The first task and the most urgent—as much for the missionary as for the catechist—is to become profoundly conscious again, intellectually of course, but equally so religiously, of the irresistible power of the Word of God....

"If the Bible is the Word of God, it is lack of faith to entertain any mistrust of it, as if the Holy Spirit, received with humility in the Church, could be anything but the source of all life for us. If the Bible is inspired by God, it is lack of faith to consider it as too difficult or hardly suitable to communicate the teaching of this faith. Yes, all our objections to the practical use of the Bible in the missionary and catechistic effort add up to a lack of faith. It is not a case of denying the difficulties, but as the proverb says, "where there's a will there's a way". Let us rather say, as Christians, "where there's faith there's a way", and above all when one believes in the Word of God....

"Before all else we have to become aware that if God has taken the trouble to speak to us, His Word is supremely effective, and it takes precedence over everything and is by right the fundamental source of all religious training. It is indeed the 'handbook' of God.

"Is this the same as saying that we must mingle the Bible and the catechism? Evidently not. The Bible as printed word is not the direct source of the faith. This faith the Christian receives from the Church. It is not therefore a question of substituting biblical teaching for the initial catechetical teaching.... The Bible is not the catechism but is its basis. It is not an organised framework of ideas. Its role is to give life to Christian education and upbringing, of which it is at the same time the source, the stimulus and the expression. It is the source because the child or beginner must know from the beginning that the teaching of the priest or missionary is only a provisional adaptation of the Word of God itself, which is passed on to him through the Church in the Scripture and read in the traditional liturgy. It is a stimulus because a first initiation to the Bible, parallel to the dogmatic teaching makes it possible to bring to life the teaching, by giving to it the irreplacable value of a living contact, religious and supernatural, with the very words of God. And then it is the expression, because systematic teaching ought to give place progressively to the Word itself, by giving more and more place to the text of the Scripture, by bringing new life to the text through its use in the liturgy and by integrating it, like a sacrifice of praise, in the eucharistic sacrifice of the Word incarnate.

"A first consequence of our renewed faith, which has been renewed in the inspiration of the Scriptures, should therefore be a revision of our methods, of our practical attitude in relation to the Bible, seen as an instrument of the catechism.... Every catechist, every missionary, should recognise anew that he is essentially committed by the Church to being the authorised trustee of the Word, 'the witness of the message' and the reader of the Scriptures...."

Such remarks are still those of a pioneer. A few years ago a leader of the biblical movement, Father P. Démann, studied methodically all the available Roman Catholic catechetical literature in France—some 2,000 volumes: books for small children, manuals for students, textbooks for teachers, etc. "A concern for this direct contact with the holy text", he states, "has been—and still remains in large sections—almost completely absent from the teaching of religion. However, to-day, we have an increasing number of pioneers whose opinion is more and more listened to, who have no hesitation in using carefully selected biblical passages as a basis for acquiring knowledge of God, and well-chosen biblical prayers—particularly from the Psalms—as a basis for the practice of a life of prayer.... Anthologies of biblical texts for biblical education are appearing in

increasing numbers. The New Testament itself is placed more and more frequently in the hands of students, particularly in secondary schools.... At the end of such a study, one begins to wonder whether we do not err when we look for primarily sociological causes of the long process of de-christianisation of which the fruits appear blatantly before our eyes to-day. 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge' (Hos. 4:6) and 'They shall wander.... to seek the word of the Lord' (Amos 8:12). To-day, timidly, a new hope arises: the signs of a catechetical renewal, inseparable from the biblical and liturgical renewals, manifest themselves increasingly day by day around us. The Spirit breathes in the Church, the same Spirit that speaks to us in the Scripture".

(*Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 5, 1954, pp. 196, 109)

The following year another writer, Dom I. Fransen, reviewing the catechetical publications issued in 1954, confirmed the "evident desire to return to the sacred text itself". Yet here again, the authorities of the Church felt obliged to issue an indirect warning. Last September the episcopal commission for religious education in France, after an intervention by the Holy See, condemned in a writ "some errors and insufficiencies" in the present effort of revision of the catechetical education. Though the document contains no statements opposing the aims of the biblical movement in the catechetical field, the absence of any reference to it is significant. The Congregation of the Holy See had actually intended to put on the index the latest catechism prepared by Father J. Colomb, the director of the national catechetical centre in France, who had himself been much influenced by the biblical movement in the preparation of his manual. Eventually the manual was authorised, after some "errata" and "additions" slips had been inserted in the book.

This pedagogical concern, which is so much in evidence among the promoters of the biblical movement, extends, of course, beyond the field of initiation or education in its narrow sense. It really embraces all aspects of the catechetical activity of the Church, including the homily and the help given to the believer in his reading and study of the Scriptures. In the preparation of these notes I have not come across any significant study of the place of the Bible in the modern Roman Catholic homiletic. Yet the whole trend of the movement itself, its whole approach to the Bible and its interpretation, is an implicit appeal to a type of homily which should at least help the listener to grasp more firmly and more deeply the truth and riches of the message of the Scriptures, even if it did not necessarily comply with what is now understood in non-Roman circles under the phrase "expository preaching"—a preaching which explains the text rather than uses the text to explain or illustrate the doctrine.

Nevertheless, the reports published in *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, for example, of the united programme of preaching worked out year after year by the priests of the six parishes of Belfort (France), all show a great concern for a Bible-centred type of preaching. For three days, at a special conference, all the curates and vicars come together to study the theme chosen: The verbal attempt to approach and define Christian doctrine through three converging ways—biblical, liturgical, theological. With the ground thus cleared, there is no difficulty in establishing the themes to be used during the year's preaching. This experience was very favourably received by the parishioners in general, and even by the least zealous. They have admitted that "sermons were beginning to become interesting" and

they try not to miss any of the subjects dealt with—the list of which is printed on a poster at the entrance of the churches. The Belfort experiment seems to be the only one of its kind but, as the widespread interest it seems to have evoked would suggest, the need for Bible-centred preaching is becoming increasingly felt.

A definite advance in that field, however, will only be possible when the whole question of interpretation has received further clarification and when enough generations of priests have trained in seminaries where the Bible and its study is given a prominent place.

The interpretation of the Scriptures

It is on this problem of the interpretation, the real understanding of the Scriptures, that the whole development of the biblical movement ultimately revolves. We have already seen earlier how, here and there, the Roman hierarchy was obliged to damp down the enthusiasm of some of the pioneers, which was judged to be dangerous. We have also seen how emphatically the leaders of the biblical movement stress that the Bible is the book of the Church, written for the Church, to be read by and in the Church. "Of course, there is nothing abnormal or wrong about reading the Bible privately", writes Dom H. McCabe in *The Blackfriars Review*, Feb., 1957; but "private reading of the Bible would be all wrong if the reader did not realize that normally the Bible is the book of the assembly of the people of God". The Bible is explosive. If it is misunderstood, misinterpreted, as it was in Catholic eyes at the time of the Reformation, by people who do not abide by the doctrinal teaching of the Church, division and disruption threaten the Church. For this reason it remains necessary, in the eyes of the Church leaders, that the Church itself should determine the way to interpret the Scripture. Unless a pattern of exegesis which both respects the doctrine of the inerrancy of the inspired Scriptures, and also keeps the Scriptures *within* Tradition (rather than additional to it) can be made acceptable, can be established as a guide for the Bible reader, in order to prevent him from falling into the trap of individual interpretation, the future of the biblical movement is bound to remain uncertain.

The literature of the Bible movement constantly refers to the search for a satisfactory set of exegetical principles. The main problem, evidently, is how to strike a satisfactory balance between the literal interpretation and the spiritual. The literal interpretation was first of all based exclusively on the critical and scientific approach. With some qualifications it quickly proved fully acceptable and was again recommended in the encyclical "Divino Afflante Spiritu" (1943). More recently a new vista was opened in the field of literal interpretation which some called a "psychological approach". This effort aimed at reading the biblical text in its depth, replaced in its semitic and early Christian setting and psychological context. It was a concern to recapture the connotations and the symbols of the text as they must have struck and moved the contemporary readers of the biblical authors. This is an approach commended and attempted by several of the leaders of the biblical movement, particularly in France.

But the 1943 encyclical also stressed the importance of a spiritual interpretation. This is also one of the concerns of the "biblists" (as the adherents of the biblical movement call themselves), who are at pains to produce a satisfactory description of a term which in the history of exegesis has covered many different trends and approaches. Spiritual exegesis, in the eyes of the "biblists" is

neither an "un-incarnate" interpretation which forgets the historical and psychological background and context, nor that kind of typological or rather allegorical interpretation which establishes connections between various figures or texts of the Bible, without due regard to the total meaning of the passages or events linked in such a way. Spiritual interpretation is "that deep, living and life-giving communion with the Word of God more distinctly known in its authentic truth, sheltered from the fallacious fancies of subjectivism or ignorance, within the securities required by the doctrine itself of the biblical inspiration". (Auzou, p.126)

It is at this point that the biblical movement converges with a third aspect of the present evolution within the Roman Catholic church, namely a fresh interest in the study of the early Church Fathers. The rediscovery of the Fathers, by some, has considerably influenced the new liturgical concern; but it has also contributed to the concern for restoring the Bible to its rightful place in the life of the Church. Again and again the representatives of the biblical movement remind their readers how biblical the thinking of the Fathers was, how concerned they were that their listeners should become well-versed in the Scriptures. For them the Bible was not just history, or ethical precepts, or culture. "What the Fathers of the Church.... seek for in the Bible is the tangible mark of the essential fact of the fundamental event of history: God's entry into the world, His revelation to man in time and space". (Dom Charlier)

Dom Charlier, in one of the recent issues of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, writing about the problem of interpretation, underlines in this way the close relation which must exist between the modern approach and that of the Fathers:—

"One may conclude by underlining the noticeable convergence of the fundamental attitudes which have inspired the patristic method and those which characterise the new directions of the historic method.

"First, both are agreed in considering history as a vital phenomenon and, more particularly, in considering Bible history as a transcendent event, the inner unfolding of which is only perceptible to the eyes of faith, in true and total commitment.

"Both are agreed also in acknowledging that words, throughout a continuing evolutionary process, reflect a depth of human thought, focussing both on outward circumstances yet at the same time obedient to its inner inspiration.

"At the same time, both are still agreed that the recognition of the inner ties which connect the Old and New Testaments should be made the basic principle of all spiritual exegesis. These ties at the same time clearly follow the continuity of God's designs, expressed in the supernatural logic of facts and the organic growth of revelation. At this point the event and the Word are closely bound together, so that they cannot be separated and require to be understood as a unity. The modern idea of 'theme' covers practically the same as what the Fathers called 'type'. The study of these themes is the basis of all reading of the Scriptures done as a spiritual quest.

"Finally, both are agreed that typology properly so called should be subordinate to this basic study. Typology should not be a means of evading the

problems which the Old Testament poses, but on the contrary should lead to a recognition of its imprescriptible message as an indissoluble link, uniting it with the New Testament". (*Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, No. 18, 1957, p.23 onwards.)

Dom O. Rousseau, in an article devoted to the Bible and the Church Fathers, also struck a similar note when he mentioned the close connection between the new approach to the Scriptures and that of the Fathers:

"Is it an exaggeration to say that the modern debate about the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures arises out of a deep-seated uneasiness on the part of the western theologian, who feels himself to be in a state of confusion in his reading of the Bible and the growth of his faith hindered by the results of developments in modern criticism, which he has not yet succeeded in sorting out? An intelligent return to the patristic works, to a new insight into the patristic commentaries, will no doubt be a means whereby we can better follow in the wake of our predecessors who, by their attachment to the traditional meaning of the Scriptures, felt they were in communion with the totality of the Church and of the apostolic faith. It seems probable that the basic tendency of the modern patristic movement lies here, but it will still require laborious efforts, for in spite of the magnificent works already undertaken, ideas are advancing only slowly. One does not learn in one day what it has taken centuries to unlearn.

".... Is not the 'return to the sources', so often referred to as 'biblical, liturgical, patristic', an indication of a return to the old way of reading the Scriptures, following in the train of the commentaries of the Church Fathers? For the Bible, read in the liturgy, is read with the background of traditional typology, which forms the basis of the patristic interpretation. Furthermore, the interminable discussions which have so much preoccupied, and still continue to preoccupy, our theologians and exegetists, concerning the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures, obviously present us with the problem of the patristic commentary and its value. Thirdly, an interesting fact: in all the handbooks of the works of the Fathers translated into the vernacular for over a hundred years—English, German, French—one might say that never (except of course, in the case of complete works or a rare case, like the *In Joannem* of St. Augustine) have people been interested in the commentaries: it was the other works exclusively which covered the cost of the publication of these commentaries.... Then, for the first time, the publishers of 'Sources chrétiennes' began to turn eagerly to this forgotten literature, and have produced translations of it....

"The problems which contact with this old way of reading the Bible pose for the reader are doubtless many, and many people are engrossed in them. We have to add to these ancient explanations, which at first sight seem to us naive and antiquated, the results of recent philological and historical research. On closer acquaintance with them, however, we discover that—stripped of certain factors due to the spirit of the time—they represent for us an extremely valuable witness of what was, from the beginning, the Christian explanation of the Scriptures, an explanation which in substance goes back to the Apostles and to Christ Himself, Who reveals and fulfils, through Himself, Moses, the Psalms and the prophets. (Luke 24:44)" (*Bible et Vie Chrétienne* No. 14, 1956, pp. 24, 29, 30)

It would go beyond the scope of the present study and beyond the writer's capacities to attempt an analysis of the exegetical approach to the Scripture as discharged by the leaders of the biblical movement in their various publications intended to help the ordinary reader of the Bible in his understanding of the Word of God. What I have observed and what others have noted in studying the explanatory notes of some Roman Catholic Bible editions, indicates a remarkably "evangelical" approach, an earnest desire to get at the real meaning of the text, even if it may seem to contradict what is usually taken for Roman Catholic doctrine. (The relation of faith, works and salvation, for instance.) Moreover, in their concern to help the reader to rediscover the fundamental meaning of the biblical text, to help him to become, as Dom Charlier says, "un semite spirituel" (a semite in spirit), exegetes seem happily to avoid, in most cases, both the intellectual and the pietistic or moralistic approach, the one dissecting the text as if it were a corpse, the other reading into the text what it never meant to say—a modern brand of the always dangerous allegorical form of interpretation.

A bird's eye view

The path on which the pioneers of the biblical movement are trying to lead those who have rediscovered or are rediscovering the Bible is, as will be seen, narrow and perilous. But it is full of rich potentialities. The Roman Catholic Church is being stirred by deep currents. The biblical renewal, supported by the liturgical and patristic movements, and backed by a steady succession of papal pronouncements during the last half century, is beginning to make deep inroads in the life of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, to repeat once more, let us not over-estimate the changes that are taking place. In the preceding pages we have mainly quoted those who form part of the spearhead of the biblical movement and new thinking in the Roman Catholic Church. Those quotations have taken us to the front-line of the advance. To get our picture in the proper perspective it is also useful to read the following description in which the Director of the Ligue de l'Evangile, a powerful handmaid of the biblical movement in France, kindly tries to state for us, as he sees it, the general position of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to the Bible. We are very grateful to Father J. G. Gourbillon for his co-operation:

"In a recent letter published by the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Roman Catholic Bible Commission (in France) a definition of the Holy Scripture was put forward which, it seems to me, best summarises Catholic thought on the subject: "Are not the Holy Books for all time the primary source and basis of the ever-growing and developing truths of the Catholic faith?"

"The main characteristic of the Catholic position is that it regards the different books of the Bible as witnesses of a tradition which is continually developing. Thanks to these documents we can follow, step by step, the unfolding process of Revelation and of God's works.

"In reading the Holy Scripture we see how the Spirit which moved the prophets and came to abide in all its fulness in Jesus, reveals to men progressively a whole body of knowledge, or rather of 'insight' (c.f. Ephesians 1:17; 4:13; Philippians 1:9 and Colossians 1:9; 2:3) which is offered to their faith by a God who loves them.

"It is this tradition, of which the books of the Bible are a witness, which is, in the eyes of Catholics, our great wealth. If the Catholic position is sometimes misunderstood it is because it is thought that the Church wants to add traditions to the Scripture, whereas what is important above all in our eyes is *the Tradition*, the first divinely inspired beginnings of which are found in the Bible.

"The process of revelation was completed with the death of the last Apostle, but the Spirit never ceases to help Christians to become more fully aware of the inestimable value of this Revelation (John 16:13). What is of importance for the Christian preacher is that he should convey to his congregation all the riches of the faith—which Christians pass on from one to another—so that those riches are seen at the stage of development at which they become part of the life of the Church. (The Protestant churches themselves accept the Creeds, which implies a further perception of the riches contained in the Holy Scripture.) Nevertheless, the preacher must remain completely faithful to the tradition in which he has been placed, as St. Paul says. (II Thessalonians 3:6; c.f. 2:15 and I Corinthians 11:2)

"This sense of a Tradition continually moving forward and developing, governs the whole Catholic attitude in relation to the Bible.

1. The Catholic has to regard the Bible as a unity, composed of different parts (is not the word Bible the translation in the singular of a Greek word which in reality is a plural?). In the study of these different parts—the different books of the Bible and even sometimes the different parts of these various books—*close account should be taken of the centuries to which they belong* (*the historical method*). Even more, it will often be necessary to go beyond the books themselves to the ancient traditions which sometimes came about in various situations, ages and settings and which reflect the thought of the people of God and of those inspired by them.

2. In the eyes of the Catholic the Holy Scripture is not, strictly speaking, the norm of the faith, but rather it reveals to us those norms of the faith that were current in different centuries. The faith of an Ezechiel, of a Jeremiah, of a Hosea is the same as that of an Eli, of a Moses, of various patriarchs; and yet the progressive recognition of the riches of the faith is undeniable. The Spirit sets in motion and carries forward a continuing process of divine instruction.

3. In the eyes of the Catholic this expounding of the richness of tradition is carried on in the Church, and the permanent norm of the faith is the teaching of the Church, which God wished to make one whole—organised, living, having different members and one head; a building continuously in process of construction but founded on the rock of the apostles and the prophets.

"The Catholic cannot forget that Christ made wonderful promises to Peter (c.f. Luke 22:32; Galatians 2:2). Neither can he forget that in the eyes of the very first Christians these promises made to Peter were always considered as reaching beyond him as an individual person.

"Consequently the Catholic, when he reads the Bible, cannot separate himself from this Church, organised as it is and in process of growth. He cannot read the Bible alone. He reads it 'catholicly', with all his fellow Christians.

He holds in his heart all these mysterious riches of the faith which the Spirit has placed in the heart of all who belong to Christ (c.f. Jeremiah 31:33-34; I John 2:20-22 and 24 onwards). These riches—the reading of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Mark, Peter, Paul, Augustine, Irene of Lyon, enables the Catholic to take stock of these and to enjoy them more and more, to become more deeply aware of and effectively acquainted with them. It is the whole Tradition which interests him, this living Tradition which begins with Abraham and is transmitted from one generation to another.

"Once again, we can only regard ourselves as cells—living ones, we would hope—which form part of one large body. What counts in our eyes is not so much an individual awareness of the truths of the faith, as this great social awareness which is the strength of the Church. From this it necessarily follows that there will be one truth only, just as there is only one Saviour, one Faith, one Spirit, one Christ, one Church which is His body".

Testimonies (i)

The "Christian Women Teachers" movement, which brings together lay teachers in Roman Catholic schools, has for a number of years now included the study of the Bible in the programme of its national congress. The results of this are summed up in the conclusion of an account of that experiment:

"The Catholic churches have reacted in various ways; there are these three groups—approximately equal in number—which have reacted according to the results of their work: for some it was an experience of healing, of conversion at a deep level; for others it was a time of questioning and fruitfully disturbing and the indication of a change at certain points, the discovery of new horizons; for still others it was a deepening of what they already suspected, to some extent, or did, bringing a sense of true fulfilment. For all of them the Bible is no longer an unimportant and sealed book, but becomes the source of life and ray of light—the personal Word which asks for a response".

A lay reader writes:

"How much I regret the fact that the reading of the Bible was not allowed until our Holy Father, Pius XII, encouraged it! It seems to me that before that reading I was having to grope my way. How different my life would have been! I deeply regret it! I should like the Bible now to be read by all Christians, for truly it is a food with which we ought to be nourished from childhood.

"I do not see any eagerness around me for Bible reading, and that distresses me. When the clergy have come to appreciate the profound influence which the Bible can have on Catholics, there will be a great change, which is very desirable. For my part, the two hours which I devote to the reading of the Bible are a great comfort to me every day: it is good to repeat during the day what our Lord constantly puts before my eyes: 'He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved'."

(*i*) The Testimonies quoted in the following pages are mainly taken from various recent issues of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*.

A Belgian student writes:

"In the house in which I am living with my friends, at Louvain, we have organised a Bible circle and everyone seems interested, even if not won over. I am persuaded that the Word of God, which makes good all our deficiences, exercises a powerfully determining effect on hearts which are the least disposed towards it; there are some, however, who get nothing out of the Bible . . . . . It is striking to note that often those who not respond come from cultured backgrounds . . . . . Is it that their intellectual training has cut them off from the divine teaching? There is no doubt that they have more difficulty in renouncing themselves, their ideas, their culture, their problems".

A medical student organised a Bible retreat for a Church youth group and wrote:

"What were the reactions of our young people? The Bible was such a sensational discovery for them that they themselves asked for the formation of a Bible circle at the college. Naturally we intend to meet their wish. Do you not find it imperative that the professors should realise that it is for the Word of God and not for lay lectures that their adolescents hunger? Those whom we have just left are so satisfied that they are asking for a biblical retreat to be arranged each year".

A woman tells of her recent conversion after a hard spiritual struggle:

"I am certain that if my faith had been nurtured by lectures of a smooth pietistic nature instead of by the Bible, it would not have survived. Thus the Bible has not been an intellectual exercise for me, but a vital nourishment which has fortified me far beyond what I had imagined".

A young woman teacher gives the following account of her biblical pilgrimage:

"Perhaps it is a good idea to tell you how I discovered the Bible. In participating in retreats, I discovered the Office. This seemed to me to be of such immense value, that since 1943 I have said it every day; when one says the main Office one wants to read the text which follows . . . . . What is more, I belong to a live parish which has had Bible circles since 1945; in a group of teachers we have studied Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews . . . . . I have arranged four leaders' camps for the study of the Bible".

A young priest explains how he reads the Bible:

"In reading the Bible I try not to accumulate a lot of information nor to remain on an abstract plane, sheltered in an 'intellectualist' isolation, outside all normal life, but rather to live a little more as a Christian, as a child of God. I try in reading the Bible to grasp the Word of God which is living and is having an influence on all men, especially those who put themselves at His disposal. In this way it is easier for me to enter into contact with God, for he presents Himself as a personal God and not as an 'abstract entity' . . . . . Please continue therefore to help us to put the Bible in its right place".

A Belgian teacher says:

"I am a retired teacher. Ever since the beginning of my teaching career in 1900 I have been astonished at the absence of the Word of God in the catechism. I have never understood this disdain for God's Book! . . . . . The determining factor in my great love for Jesus was the reading of Matthew 4

verse 3: It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This maxim of Deuteronomy (8, 3), recalled by Jesus, thus places on all men the obligation to live by the Word of God (if possible every day). This is what I have done since 1935. And I can tell you that it is in the Word of God and there alone—in particular in meditating on the New Testament—that I have found true consolation and the courage to suffer".

A nun engaged in education describes the effort made in her class to inculcate, interest and respect for the Bible among the children:

"Last year", she writes, "the children had become so keen on the Bible that they all wanted their parents to give one to them for Christmas. As they are still very young, we advised against it but they were given 'Bible selections'."

The following longer testimony indicates some difficulties which the biblical movement still encounters at the parish level:

"In practice the idea of the Bible group in M. was closely linked with a personal quest.

"To begin with, there was a first contact with the Scripture, around the years 1933 to 1934, a contact which was encouraged and favoured by the Catholic youth movements of that time and by the book of Canon Mullier of Poudreville—*Tout l'Evangile dans toute la vie*. This contact was essential and was to be justified in times of discouragement in the future.

"When I came back from the war in 1940, I returned to the Bible more seriously, by re-starting a regular group under the title: Conference de St. Vincent de Paul. Instead of the religious reading which figured on the usual programme of the meetings, we had a study circle on the Gospel, using a small publication by Jean Guitton entitled *La personne du Christ d'après l'Evangile*. What we did was quite a modest effort, but it really put us in contact with the evangelists: most of the others bought a Bible, those who were married discussing it with their wives. Very quickly the ferment began to work. One made discoveries in the Gospel . . . . . and I will pass over in silence the discovery of one of our number who was quite astonished to know that there were four evangelists, and of the other who believed there was no other Gospel than the one that his missal contained . . . . .

"Shortly afterwards, I bought the Crampon New Testament, then that of Buzy, and got down to the letters of St. Paul, St. James . . . . . And I always remained very puzzled at the frequent allusions to the Old Testament which previously I had found both superfluous and irritating.

"I was at this point when a railway-man, instructed in the Old Testament by some Protestant colleagues during his period of military service, arrived in our little group. He was an educated lad, read Latin and Greek easily, and at that moment had begun to get acquainted with a Hebrew grammar. Being an enthusiast, he communicated to me a little of his ardour for the Old Testament. Thanks to him I came to realise that there were treasures in the whole of that part of the Bible.

"But this was only a lightening occurrence with us. With the authorisation of my curé (this was in 1943!) I tried to obtain a Crampon Bible—not without difficulty. I got immersed in the Old Testament and fell upon the Book of

Hosea, which I found completely disconcerting. I was shocked by all the stories of prostitutes and prostitution. Our curé could not help me and did not reply to my questions.

"Disappointed at not understanding much, I put the Bible on one side. And yet I found this Old Testament intriguing and I looked for the key to my enigma.

"It was 1945. Just then I discovered *l'Histoire du Peuple de la Bible*, by Daniel Rops. I spoke about all this at our weekly meeting of Conférence de S. Vincent de Paul and together we decided to study the Scripture in order to make contact with the text of the Old Testament. We began to mimeograph a study outline, to make maps of the Fertile Crescent, of Egypt. A young professor of biblical studies, passing through M., interested our friends. The enthusiasm of some of them, added to their lack of religious background, caused them to act unwisely and our curé, not feeling sure about the whole matter, decided to put the brakes on. He called me on one side and asked me to stop this study.

"Thus the Bible was again put on one side. As I was at this time in process of setting up a group of hostels, the number of different concerns I was handling made me forget this restriction. Then came the contact with 'Amitiés Scoutes', now called 'Vie Nouvelle'. The journal of this movement spoke a lot in 1946-47 of the need to return to the Bible for a mature faith and a Christian life which was simple, strong, ardent, in order to combat all the degradations which lie in wait for us. The Abbé Joly is on the point of inserting in this review some outlines for Bible study.

"And thus again the Bible is put on the agenda. This time it will be grappled with seriously. What is more, I am helped at the present time by what is fashionable. The Bible is to the forefront. The 'Ligue Catholique de l'Evangile' is publishing the Bible translation of Cardinal Liénart, and I am helping with its distribution in the parish.

"In 1950, being better equipped, we turned, within the framework of our group of 'Vie Nouvelle', with affection towards the Old Testament. At last our little Bible group has extended to the whole parish of M. and has in particular become a meeting place of the militant members of the parish, for their religious education".

Here again the present limits of the biblical movement are clearly shown:

"In my very small sphere of influence I try to spread the reading of the Bible; but one must go gently in order to awaken the desire for knowledge, and one often comes up against lack of time, lack of background or of perseverence. I also try to persuade the young priests I know to give sermons of substance on Sundays. You know better than I how superficial, hurried or clumsy much of the teaching in our campaigns is . . . .

"I am surprised to see that certain clergy are indifferent if not hostile to the Old Testament, treating the Scriptures like a series of beautiful legends which one no longer has the time to teach. I know that the hours given to the catechism are short, but it is for this reason that I call for some solid sermons and an exposition of the Gospel based on the Old Testament".

And to close this series, we quote three testimonies made by a Protestant pastor in the north of France, which indirectly confirm how much needed the biblical movement is in a country like France:

"Some time ago a Roman Catholic teacher whom we met by chance confided to us how disappointed he was at not being able to study the Bible in his parish. He had asked his vicar for some Bible studies, but the curé replied that the vicar was not sufficiently prepared for this work. 'But what did they do at the seminary, if they didn't study the Bible?' cried the teacher. The other day again he confessed to me his sadness at seeing the biblical renewal in the Roman Catholic Church in France being restrained by the Vatican.

"Recently a young engaged couple came to me, asking for the blessing on their marriage. Both are Roman Catholics. They knew the Bible a little and wanted to understand it better; but no one in their church explained it to them, they assured me. So they came to us with their thirst for the Word of God.

"And this man, a militant anarchist, convinced reader of S. Faure, who came to the service one day to tell me that he would in future be a faithful Christian. He had found the reply to his problems in the Bible, to the extent that the anti-religious literature soon seemed insipid, feeble. Now he knows his God and his Master in freedom".

A questionnaire was sent out last December to readers of Bible et Vie Chrétienne, *mainly asking what readers expect from the reading of the Bible. Two of the answers so far received are significant*:—

A mother of six—aged forty—writes:

"There is no doubt that at first I looked to the Bible for literary or poetic and psychological satisfaction, which is always there . . . . . Afterwards, I looked in some measure for justification of the world and myself, and the proof that my life was not in vain, that I was right . . . . . But for the past four or five years I have often read it solely in order to know God, to meet His splendour there, having within myself a ray of light which must be the Amen of my later life . . . . . I read the Bible more and more in order to love God".

The second correspondent a young woman theological student, writes:

"The reading of the Bible for me is a *prayer* and therefore I expect from it nothing in return, just as one expects nothing of Him whom one loves, except His presence and to live with Him".

The following five brief articles indicate the position in some European countries and on the mission field . . . . .

Bible Distribution among Roman Catholics in Austria

Karl Uhl

IN THE AUGUSTINIAN monastery at Klosterneuburg, near Vienna, the work of distribution of God's Word continues to be carried out energetically. This is also the only centre in Austria from which this activity is comparatively well organised, doubtless a legacy of that great Bible distributor, Dr. Pius Parsch. The Klosterneuburg "Bible apostolate"—as it calls itself—attempts not only to give to the Bible as the Word of God its right place within the framework of the Catholic Church, but tries with great enthusiasm to point to the fact that the the Bible is not only a book for the Church and the priest, but above all a book for the laity. The magazine *Bible and Liturgy* produced from the same centre, publishes regularly much valuable material along these lines. This magazine, which appears every two months, says, among other things: "Catholics do not know the Bible. Most of them also do not wish to know it. One knows the essentials of it still from school. . . . Nevertheless the others know the Bible, the sectarians and communists. For this reason the Klosterneuburg "Bible Apostolate" turns to the broad mass of Catholics, confronting them with two aims: (1) to distribute the Bible; (2) to further the knowledge of the Bible."

The Klosterneuburg "Bible Apostolate" has, since its formation, which as is known was undertaken by Dr. Pius Parsch in 1951, has sold 195,000 copies of the Scripture. In 1957 alone 20,000 copies were distributed through this centre. Of the total, one may reckon that 80% were New Testaments and 20% Bibles. Exact figures of the Scriptures distributed are unfortunately not obtainable.

In order to direct attention to the Bible and to point out the importance of Bible reading, it is at times stated in these publications: that Leo XIII offered a complete indulgence to all who read the Bible daily; that Pius X pointed out that if we wish to renew everything in Christ, nothing was more desirable than that our children should make a habit of reading the Gospel daily; that Benedict XV wrote: "we would constantly urge all believers to work through the Gospels and the Epistles by means of daily readings and endeavour to absorb them into their flesh and blood"; that Pius XI said: "we want to get to know the Gospel, to love it and to distribute it, for no book can speak to the soul with so much of the light of truth, with so great a power of example, and with so much true love"; that Pius XII has declared: "it is suitable and agreeable to state that the use of the Bible among Catholics has made great progress".

We read further: "above all we ourselves must read the Holy Scripture assiduously. Every group, every gathering of priests or laymen, should begin and end with a short Scripture reading and interpretation. As long as we have

no official prearranged Bible Sunday, we ought at least once a year to call people to purchase and read the Bible, and then to take care that the Bible is also easily obtainable. On every occasion that is offered people should be reminded that they can pass on a copy of the Bible as a gift. Every parish should at least have its own occasion for observing Bible Sunday".

Of the 122 parishes in Vienna, Bible study is available already in 54 of them, in most cases fortnightly, sometimes weekly, sometimes once a month. The number of participants varies greatly, from 20 to 200, of whom on an average 75% are women and 25% men. The participation of young people is comparatively large. According to statistics for the year 1956, the following books of the Bible were dealt with in these Bible study groups: Acts 12 times; Epistles 11 times; the life of Jesus 7 times; Revelation 6 times; Gospels of Mathew and Luke 5 times. In addition on various occasions parts of the Old Testament were taken by the Bible study groups, though on the whole the New Testament took precedence.

There are in the work of the Catholic Church two movements which do not exist everywhere, yet which appear to be working seriously and hopefully. One of these is the Catholic Working Youth and the other the Catholic Youth Movement. It is noteworthy in both cases that part of the programme consists in a layman reading a portion of the Scripture at each meeting and on that basis giving a short biblical exposition. On this point it should be stated that importance is placed on the necessity of the person who gives the exposition doing so as a result of his own effort.

Bible work to-day is a more burning subject than ever. An indication of this may be found again and again in the magazine of the Klosterneuburg "Bible Apostolate". In this connection it is interesting that a Catholic press agent recently reported that requests had been made for the Bible in ten representative book-shops of Vienna. This is not so much because the book-sellers do not wish to sell Bibles, but because there is always too little demand for the Bible on the part of people. All the priests are earnestly summoned to call attention through their sermons and in their church publications, to the necessity for each person to have at home a Bible, or at least a New Testament.

In the *Wiener Kirchenblatt*, which appears weekly, we find a quiz in the form of those used for football pools. The following is one for Sunday, Feb. 9th of this year:

1. Who wrote the Gospel for to-day: the evangelist Mark or Luke?
2. Who speaks to you in the Gospel: Jesus or Paul?
3. What do you hear to-day ; a parable or report of a miracle ?
4. What does the Gospel tell about to-day: a field of corn or of God's Kingdom of the Church?
5. Who is the sower: Christ or the priest?
6. What is meant by seed: grace or the Word of God?
7. What does the ground mean: the world or your own heart?
8. What do you want to be: stony ground or good ground?
9. What must you do: listen gladly to God's Word or keep it faithfully?

Those who believe the first part of the question is true write a '1'. If the second part is considered correct, the person writes a '2' and if any think that both are right, they write 'X' in the column provided.

From all this it has to be recognised that within the circles of the Catholic Church there are a number of serious men who are deeply concerned that the Scripture should be distributed among the people. Naturally all that has happened so far can be seen as only slight progress, but it is nevertheless a good beginning.

Centres of The Biblical Movement in France and Belgium

The Abbey of Maredsous (Benedictine)

It was shortly after the second world war that the monks of this abbey began their energetic biblical campaign.

Under the leadership of Dom P. Passelecq, a new translation of the Bible was published. Not far from one million Portions were circulated; hundreds of thousands of New Testaments and Bibles were also published. There are at present four different editions of the Maredsous Bible available.

Dom C. Charlier, who has been quoted many times in the preceding pages, also belongs to the Maredsous community, though heading up an offshoot of the monastery in Sanary, South of France. Dom Charlier is the Director of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, a quarterly.

In the list of contents of each issue one finds several basic articles, usually grouped round a general theme; then come studies of Bible passages, one from the Old Testament, the other from the New—which often illustrate the theme of the issue. There is also included a section of Bible notes to help the reader to deal with the text of one or other of the books of the Bible by means of comments and technical information. A final section is devoted to correspondence, reports on various experiments, and a book review. There are plans also to introduce Bible study outlines for the use of Bible circles.

In addition, Dom Passelecq has also started *The Holy Bible explained*, a series of five instalments, giving short and simple notes for those with only primary education who are beginners in the reading of the Bible.

A number of books and brochures related to various aspects of the study of the Bible and of the actual biblical movement have also been published in Maredsous. As an extension of the services rendered by *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*, summer Bible holiday camps and retreats have also been organised in France

at which there is intensive Bible study and extensive discussion on the possibilities and ways of widening and deepening interest in the Scriptures among the population in the areas to which the campers belong.

Under the direction of Dom Passelecq a Bible exhibition of an educational nature has also been set up in Maredsous and has already been shown in many places in Belgium and France.

St. André-lez-Bruges (Benedictine)

This abbey is closely related to the one referred to above. Dom Th. Maertens has also issued a series of simple commentaries for beginners entitled "Pas à pas avec la Bible". The Abbey also publishes a series of commentaries *Lumière et Vie* and a supplement to the Abbey's periodical, devoted to problems of Christian initiation and education, which goes to some 9,000 priests regularly.

Ligue Catholique de l'Evangile (France. Director: Father J. G. Gourbillon)

This organisation, founded in 1889, has in the last ten to fifteen years known a striking development. It is this organisation which sponsored the publication and distribution of about 250,000 copies of the "Bible du Cardinal Liénart", the Roman Catholic Bible most widely distributed in France in the Pirot and Clamer translation. It has three main activities: (1) the circulation of the Scriptures and publications about the Bible; (2) the publication of an excellent quarterly *Evangile* (nearly 7,000 copies), which aims at helping the ordinary reader of the Bible to find and study some of the leading themes which run through the Bible: The God of the Poor, The Lord is my Shepherd, Bible and Nature, The Bridegroom and the Bride, The Prophets of the Bible, the Messiah, etc. Each issue also contains a section of "applied studies" to encourage readers and groups to study the Scriptures by themselves and to find there answers to suggested questions; (3) the organisation of Bible weeks in various cities of France, with a team of speakers who go around, taking with them a Bible exhibition. These "weeks" include public gatherings, meetings with priests, monks, teachers. Summer holiday Bible camps are also regularly organised and also, from time to time, conducted pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Through its local representatives the Ligue encourages the organisation of diocesan Bible study groups and the supply of such groups with relevant material. They are connected with Bible study groups in prisons, in sanatoria, etc. To stimulate interest in the Bible among future clergy, the Ligue offers annual essay competitions on biblical themes to the students.

Several publishing houses are taking an active part in the furtherance of the biblical movement.

The publishing house 'Le Cerf' (Dominican)

This publishing house deserves perhaps particular mention because of its connection with the Ecole biblique de Jérusalem. Besides a large number of publications relative to the Bible and, in particular, a number of important commentaries in their series *Lectio Divina*, they have also published the well known "Bible de Jérusalem", which certainly marks an important date in the history of the translation of the Bible in French.

The biblical courses of St. John the Baptist's Circle

During the last decade many groups for Bible study or for introduction to the Bible have sprung up in Western Europe. In France, the St. John the Baptist Circle was one of the first to be organised; as a pioneer experiment, it played a significant part in the progress of the whole movement. It started in 1944 under the leadership of Father J. Danielou (Jesuit), one of the leading figures among the French Roman Catholic biblical scholars. It aims at developing the missionary spirit and a true understanding of mission among young women. Besides the biblical sections, others on missiology, introduction to non-Christian cultures, etc., have been organised. All the teaching bears the threefold character: missionary, biblical, devotional.

The Circle also issues a *Bulletin*, organises conferences, arranges correspondence courses and, in this way, exerts a wide influence among seminaries, monasteries, missionary fellowships not only in France but in many parts of the world, particularly through missionaries.

The Action Catholique

This body has developed quite an interest in the Scriptures in many of its sections and branches, particularly in support of its evangelistic and missionary action. There is, however, no general study or survey of this movement available.

The Bible & The Roman Catholic Movement in Germany Today

Alfred Müller

THE EXTENT OF BIBLE production, distribution and reading in the Roman Catholic Church in Germany has always been closely bound up with the official position of the Catholic Church and has therefore varied according to the attitude of the Pope at different times.

The Catholic Church in Germany not possessing an official Church text of the Bible (as we have with the Luther text) always makes use of original text or of the Vulgate into German—translations which were made by Catholic theologians of the 19th and 20th centuries. These translations are naturally stamped with the understanding of the Bible according to Catholic dogma, but take into account the use of present-day language. From the point of view of typography and general appearance, the editions for the most part are remarkable productions.

Some Roman Catholic translations have been published or circulated (without notes or comments) by the Bible Societies; they are the L. van Ess (1772-1827) Bible; the Regensburg New Testament, translated by Bishop G. M.

Wittmann (1760-1833); the J. von Allioli Bible (1793-1873), the most widely circulated, later revised by A. Arnt at the end of the 19th century. Prof. K. Thieme has been working on a new revision since 1949.

The catalogue of the Catholic Bibelwerk, according to the edition of 1st January, 1957, offers to the Catholic population of Germany the following editions:

Two editions of the whole Bible, four editions of the Old Testament, nine editions of the New Testament, eight editions of Portions, ten of abridged Bibles (so-called "Family Bibles"), and eight editions of the Psalms.

For the priests and theological students there are the Biblica Hebraica (R. Kittel), the Septuagint (Rahlfs) and the Greek New Testament (Nestle) all publications of the Stuttgart Bible Society, (the biggest of the evangelical Bible Societies in Germany). In addition there are six further Latin editions of Catholic publishers.

On September 22nd, 1933, the organisation "Catholic Bible Movement" was formed. Its founder, Mgr. Dr. J. Straubinger, had to leave Germany in 1937 for political reasons. He went to South America, where for a number of years he took an active part in the work of Bible distribution. From 1938 onwards the organisation called itself the "Catholic Bibelwerk". The patron is the Bishop of Rottenburg.

This organisation, now under the direction of Dr. W. T. Auer, is known to-day throughout Catholic Germany. Priests and laymen belong to it as members. Each German diocese has a diocesan leader of Bibelwerk. A Publishing-house and bookshop constitute the Bibelwerk, through which all Catholic editions are obtainable.

The aim of Catholic Bibelwerk is two-fold:

1. to encourage the distribution of the Holy Scriptures among Catholics—according to the directions of the Church authorities.

2. to make the "Book of Books" available to the people in every possible way.

The Statutes of Bibelwerk outline the following special tasks, among others:

1. constantly to recall people to the Church's exhortation to regular Bible reading in periodicals and other publications;

2. to further the regular distribution of the Bible in families, schools, institutions, homes, hospitals, organisations, etc.;

3. to encourage a reduction in the selling price of Bible editions specially recommended by the Bishops for distribution;

4. to further the textual standardisation of Bible translations recognised by the Church;

5. to call attention to the use of the Scriptures for preachers for religious education, for Bible study and home life. To encourage the production of suitable literature;

6. to give guidance in the use of the Scriptures in individual groups in parishes and Christian organisations.

7. to undertake the distribution of biblical pictures, slides, films, etc.

8. to give guidance on practical Bible work through lectures and discussions for priests and laymen.

The organ of Bibelwerk is the paper *Bible and Church*, which appears four times a year, and is only obtainable through membership in Bibelwerk. Its character is different from that of our Bible Society periodicals: most of the space is devoted to articles of an exegetical and apologetic nature: then special attention is called to information on questions of textual history (Qumran discoveries, etc.). Reports on the work of translation, production and distribution of the Bible in the world to-day are seldom or only briefly given. On the other hand space is given to book reviews; insofar as they are works by evangelical authors, the criticisms of the subject are controversial but of a high tone.

Recently Direktor Auer, in *Bible and Church*, recommended Catholic parishes in Germany, on the occasion of weddings, to give the bridal pair a Bible or New Testament, a practice which is a good old custom in the evangelical Church in Germany.

At the present time ecumenical emphases have been noticeable. Recently the Berlin representative of Bibelwerk reported on his visit to Uppsala and to the grave of Archbishop Söderblom, referring to the tablet as that of "the Lutheran Church" leader, whose life was devoted to the cause of peace among the Christian confessions. "Someone had placed a fresh bunch of red roses on Söderblom's grave, thus showing that the cause for which this man had lived and died still finds a response to-day in the hearts of men. May these roses never fade!" The Bibelwerk also distributes a motto card with a saying of Bishop Besson of Lausanne, "Our forefathers became separated over the Gospel; we shall find one another again through the Gospel ".

Since its foundation in 1933—that is to say for over 25 years—the Catholic Bibelwerk has produced a Bible reading plan under the title "God's Word in the Church Year". For each day of the year a text from the Bible is provided, the content of which is explained in a few lines. With fewer and fewer exceptions these comments could with profit be read also by evangelical Christians.

One activity specially promoted by Bibelwerk is the setting up and running of Bible study in the Catholic communities. A whole series of helps have been produced at the present time for this work.

It is reported that the Catholic Bibelwerk in Germany has up to the present distributed more than 5 million Bibles and Portions. The attention of anyone interested in the question of "Catholicism and the Bible in Germany" in detail, is called to the book by Dr. W. T. Auer *Catholic Bible Knowledge*, Stuttgart 1956, which is excellently well informed. Characteristic of the personal attention of the author in his love of the Bible, his concern for the unfamiliarity with the Bible among Catholic Church members, his enthusiasm for its distribution. His review of the significance of the evangelical Bible Societies concludes with the

sentence: "Would it not have been more profitable at the beginning of the 18th century if the Church had called into being a strong Catholic Bible movement? Have we Catholics not arrived on the scene too late?" And in another place: "It is still always the case that for our Catholic people the Bible is a book closed with seven seals".

Prof. D. V. Loewenich, a well known evangelical Church historian and distinguished expert on the Catholic Church, writes that the Catholic Bible movement should be regarded "as the most positive feature in modern Catholicism".

The Roman Catholic Bible Movement in Holland

D. Deden

THE REVIVAL IN HOLLAND of Roman Catholic biblical science dates back to only just after World War I. As a result of the delay caused by the fear of modernism and integralism, the work had in fact to be started from the ground upwards. Nearly everything was lacking. Neither contemporary translations from the original text, nor commentaries which more or less corresponded with the advance in the scientific world, were available. It is easily understandable, therefore, that the first thing taken in hand was the supply of these elementary needs to the Roman Catholic people, a work which is now on the whole, though not entirely, completed. The first necessity was the publication of popular editions of translations from the basic text, with short notes. In 1938, two complete popular Bibles came from the press simultaneously: "De Katholieke Bijbel" (Old Testament by L. Himmelreich, o.f.m., New Testament by C. Smits, o.f.m.) and the more generally accepted "Canisius-Bijbel", so named after its publisher, the apologetic association "Petrus Canisius" (Old Testament by a team, New Testament chiefly the work of R. L. Jansen, o.p., dating from 1929). As separate translations of the New Testament mention should still be made of those of the Flemings Van Tichelen (Antwerp 1926) and J. B. Poukens, s.j. (Turnhout 1941). This year the publication of a modern translation of the New Testament is expected, edited by the Working Group of "St. Hieronymus". It will have a great advantage over the above-mentioned translations, in that the Working Group has declared its willingness to bring this small Hieronymus Bible up to date in all future editions and to keep it abreast of the times.

Great merit is due to J. Keulens for having filled the need for a not too technical, solid commentary on the New Testament (De Boeken van het Nieuwe Testament, Roermond 1935-46; second edition 1950-56). A commentary on the Old Testament, under the editorship of A. van den Born, W. Grossouw and J. van der Ploeg is in course of appearing.

It is not so long ago since Dutch Roman Catholics, as far as Bible literature was concerned, were entirely committed to translations of foreign authors (Lagrange, Ricciotti, Daniel Rops, Cerfaux, Knox, etc.). In the meantime, this gap has been filled, even to the extent that works of Dutch Roman Catholics

on the Bible are also in demand abroad. The most outstanding evidence of this is the "Bijbels Woordenboek" (biblical vocabulary—Roermond, 1941). It became a best seller, which proves that the growing interest in the Bible did not remain restricted to the circle of professional scientists. The second edition, a joint achievement of some 30 exegetists from the Netherlands and Belgium, was thoroughly revised, whilst the bibliography was carefully brought up to date. Within a short time it will be possible also, outside of the domain of the Dutch language, to satisfy oneself of its solidity and utility. Germany (Benzinger, Einsiedeln) is already preparing its second edition. The French version (based on the second Dutch edition) is being edited by the monks of the Keizersberg at Louvain and may be expected during 1959. The English version (based on the second Dutch edition) is being edited by members of the American Catholic Bible Association, Washington; it is expected to be ready in 1960. The Italian edition (based on the German version) is supposed to appear in 1958 with the Soc. Editr. Intern., Torino. Finally, the Spanish edition (based on the German version also) is edited by Herder of Barcelona; details are as yet unknown.

Another publication of international significance is the much lauded "Atlas of the Bible" (Amsterdam, 1954), by L. H. Grollenberg, o.p., a former teacher of the Bible School at Jerusalem. The maps defy all criticism; some of them are printed in ten colours and they show all that can be desired. These maps have been enlivened in two fashions: in the first place, by a wealth of illustrations (408), including chiefly landscapes which are very beautiful and instructive and, as it were, constitute a transition from map to photograph; and then by an accompanying text, which is as effective as a running commentary. This atlas surpasses the best that has been produced in this field. The first edition of 4,000 copies was sold out long ago; a second is in the course of preparation. English, French and German (Gutersloh) editions of this atlas have already appeared; a South African version is also now available. Smaller publications have also found their way abroad. Of Professor Grossouw's works, "Het Christendom van Johannes" (St. John's Christianity, 1942) and the Pauline study "In Christus" (In Christ, 1946) were both translated into French and English, and his "Bijbelse Vroomheid" (Biblical Piety, 1954) into German. Translations of H. Renckens' masterpiece "Israels visie op het verleden" (Israel's Vision of the Past, Gen. I-III) are under consideration.

Similarly, the popularization of the Bible ought to be mentioned. Of the "Bijbelse Geschiedenis" (Biblical History) of J. Keulers, 36,000 copies have already been circulated among the public. The sixth edition has been thoroughly revised by Mgr. J. O. Smit, consultant of the Papal Bible Commission, who summarised in it post-war literature on several biblical questions as well as data from the secular sciences. The Montfortians greatly influence the common people by their weekly radio talks, subsequently collected in the series "Het Boek der Boeken" (The Book of Books) and in their monthly "'t Heilig Land" (The Holy Country). The Dominicans also promote the Bible in their weekly "De Bazuin" (The Trumpet), which every now and then devotes a special number of 24 pages to a biblical subject. Their magazine "Kerugma", a paper for biblical preaching, however, addresses itself to priests and seminarists (1,500 subscribers) and their "Getuigenis" (Witness) to catechists. Bible courses are becoming more and more acceptable. Secular and regular priests attend with great interest a sort of biblical refresher course, and special courses have been instituted in all big centres for school teachers. But many cities also have clubs for ordinary laymen, where the Bible is read and studied together. Evidence of this, for instance, is the fact that a book like "Dichtbij U is het Woord" (The Word is

near to you, Bussum, 1957), is the work of an Amsterdam Bible club. In it the four authors discuss: The Roman Catholic and the Holy Scriptures; Practice of Scripture reading; The Holy Scriptures for us; Characteristics. A lay publication of this sort would hardly have been conceivable formerly!

The facts given above show plainly that in Roman Catholic circles the Bible is no longer regarded as a clerical book. This is surely a great step in the right direction, even though for the Roman Catholic layman, the norm of the correct understanding of the Bible remains the "sentire cum Ecclesia".

Finally, Roman Catholic biblical scholars have joined in the "Bijbels Werkgenootschap Sint Hieronymus" (Biblical Working Group of St. Hieronymus) which, apart from organising lectures within its own circles, also concerns itself with publications. Thus, in addition to the "Hieronymus Bible" already mentioned, it has also provided an introductory work: "De Wereld van de Bijbel" (The World of the Bible), of which the 4,000 copies printed are already sold out. Individual members are also active. Professor J. Simons, s.j., the leading Roman Catholic expert in Holland on the Dead Sea Scrolls, is publishing (with Brill of Leiden) a series of works in this field. Many members also entertain lively contacts with their foreign Roman Catholic colleagues (for instance, during the annual Bible days in Louvain), as well as with their non-Roman Catholic colleagues both at home and abroad.

The Bible on The Mission Field

(Extracts from correspondence in *Bible et Vie Chrétienne*)

IN A REVIEW of the report on a Study Week in Leopoldville (1955), dealing with the question of the Religious Training of the African, one of the collaborators of *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* criticised the complete lack, during that week, of any serious examination of the place the Scriptures should have in African religious education.

In a later issue, a missionary in Africa criticised the review: "In the first place", he wrote, "the reviewer does not mention what is nevertheless a formidable obstacle—language. Put the text of the Bible at the basis of religious education? Of course! But let us start with the translation of the Bible in the several hundreds of main dialects spoken by Africans...."

The answer of the Director of the periodical reads: "As a matter of fact, the problem raised by our correspondent has been faced by all the witnesses of God's Word, to whatever time and to whatever country they may have belonged, since the beginning of the Church. The history of the various translations of the Bible coincides with the history of Christian expansion itself. The serious fact is precisely that nowadays things should no longer be quite like that, and that one should expect to preach 'the Gospel' without circulating the text on which it is essentially based; naturally such a work of translation of the Scriptures

cannot be done overnight. But before they circulated the Scriptures for individual reading, the Christian preachers of the message, in former times, were able to translate it at sight, at least its main passages...."

And another correspondent from Africa, who also deplored the 'absence of the Bible' at the Leopoldville Conference, writes later: "I was also struck, like you, by the almost complete absence of the Bible at the Leopoldville Conference.... But the first thing to do would be to convert the missionaries themselves.... The first reason why nobody is concerned about the place of the Bible in Christian education, is that at heart nobody believes in its usefulness. I could bring forth masses of unequivocal testimonies on the subject. I do not blame our poor missionaries.... We were never trained to express our devotion in biblical terms....

"It is always the same: the Scriptures are a storehouse of arguments, of examples, of moving words, in order to improve or embellish the theological theses, which are more or less outworn, which fill our catechetical books and our collections of sermon outlines. Therefore, you see, the first thing to do would be to give to the missionaries a fresh vision of the Bible and above all to help them to live out the Bible in their daily life...."

To this the Director answered: "With a moving sincerity our correspondent puts his finger on the wound; it is the living, active, transforming faith in the power of the Bible, read within the Church, which is mostly lacking and which needs to undergo a regeneration.... When this living and personal contact (with the Word of God) is re-established, methods and institutions will be transformed by the almighty power of this divine Word and of the Spirit".

In this connection it is interesting to note the complete lack of any reference to the use of the Scriptures in a book (which is otherwise most enlightening) recently published in France and written by African and West Indian priests, under the title *Des prêtres noirs s'interrogent* (black priests take stock). One of the chapters brings an excellent study on "black mentality and biblical mentality", showing how close to each other both are. Neither the author of this section nor any of his colleagues draws what would in our view be an obvious conclusion.

A Handful of Facts

The St. Paul's Society, which celebrated its 40th anniversary a few years ago, reported a total circulation up to that time of almost 13 million copies of Scriptures, mainly Gospels.

In 1954 there were about 250 students at the papal Bible institute, from over 30 different countries.

After four years of preparatory studies, a team of five scholars in Paris has begun work on the preparation of a complete Bible concordance in French, based on Roman Catholic translations.

*

More than 30 cities have been visited by the Bible exhibition of the Ligue catholique de l'Evangile in France. (A similar exhibition is in preparation in Ottawa, Canada.)

The authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam have decided to begin work on a Roman Catholic translation of the complete Bible in Vietnamese. The four Gospels and Revelation have already been published and circulated.

The Ligue catholique de l'Evangile has also supplied the Vietnamese Church with a Bible exhibition, which has recently been shown in refugee camps.

*

A French translation of C. H. Dodd's "The Bible To-day" was issued last year in a series of books produced by the Maredsous periodical, Bible et Vie Chrétienne, under the same title, and with the same editor Dom C. Charlier.

*

For the first time in British history, a Bible commentary in English, written entirely by Roman Catholics, has been produced.

The authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam have decided to begin work on a Roman Catholic translation of the complete Bible in Vietnamese. The four Gospels and Revelation have already been published and circulated.

The Ligue catholique de l'Evangile has also supplied the Vietnamese Church with a Bible exhibition, which has recently been shown in refugee camps.

The Franciscans have opened a biblical institute in Tokyo, the aim of which is the preparation of a Japanese version of the Old and New Testaments with critical notes.

*

For the first time last year in Caracas (Venezuela) a large Roman Catholic Bible exhibition was organised in relation with the Bible Week held there.

*

Bible reading is given a central place in a Benedictine monastery recently established in Mexico. For the past seven years about four hours a day have been devoted by the monks to Bible reading. Courses in biblical history and culture are also included. All novices follow the same programme.

The lay monks have also asked for a Bible study circle to be organised in Mexico.

The sale of Scriptures and of books on the Bible is included among the activities of the monastery.

*

The Bible movement in Argentina continues to show signs of life and great activity. Bible weeks, Bible weekends, Bible evenings are organised in city after city. Last year a Bible course by correspondence was launched as an experiment. Already 750 students have registered.

*

Last August a Roman Catholic priest in Santa Isabel (Colombia) entered a home of a Protestant, poured oil over his Bible and burned it.

*

The two main centres of biblical and liturgical revival in Spain are the monastery of Montserrat (Benedictine) and "Foment de Pietat" (Jesuit). The former, which started on the liturgy in 1915, soon developed great activity in the scholarly study of the Bible and the preparation of a new translation of the Bible in Spanish. The latter specialised in the wide circulation of liturgical books, missals and Scriptures.

*

Under the influence of the Society for the Development of Bible Studies in Spain, a new interest is being shown in the Scriptures. In three years, the movement has circulated 60,000 Testament and 200,000 Gospels and Acts. A cheap edition of the Bible is being planned.

Travelling Bible exhibitions have also been organised in various parts of the country and material encouraging the reading of the Bible has been published. "If we are doctors, lawyers, bank officials", said an editorial of a Spanish periodical in 1957, on the occasion of the week of Bible studies held in Madrid (such national weeks are held annually in Spain), "we have always at hand a little bookshelf on which we can find the basic books of our profession. These are our professional 'scriptures'. But how many of us possess this little library—the Bible—which has been written for our profession as Christians?"

*

From a letter written by a priest on 1st October, 1957: "I had pleasure in receiving, a few days ago, a few Gospels and a New Testament which you were kind enough to send me, on the occasion of a certain broadcast from Switzerland. I say I had pleasure in receiving this propaganda material, for I had always been desirous of turning myself into a General Inquisitor in order to be able to burn Cipriano de Valera, as indeed I did last Sunday after Mass, in the village market place, in the presence of numerous onlookers.... I am a priest of Jesus Christ and for the first time in my life I have had the joy of burning a Cipriano de Valera on the public square. Thanks be to God...."

*

At the Brussels International Exhibition, Scriptures in different languages and dating from various periods are on show in one of the sections of the Vatican pavilion. Other documents related to the Bible, its history, its content—archeology, art, panels for teaching, geographical maps--are also exhibited.

*

In 1954 in France a series of sketches, prepared under the auspices of the Ligue catholique de l'Evangile, on the life of Abraham, were shown on national TV networks. The following year a weekly biblical broadcast was organised: the Bible in the home. A correspondence service was set up to answer all the queries sent in by viewers following the broadcast.

The Ligue has also established a centre for visual aid materials. They

have available twelve different series of biblical pictures in the form of slides and several films on biblical themes and on Palestine.

*

More than 30 cities have been visited by the Bible exhibition of the Ligue catholique de l'Evangile in France. (A similar exhibition is in preparation in Ottawa, Canada.)

*

The Psalms in French, in the version of the *Bible de Jérusalem*, have been put to music anew by Father Gélineau. The text and music of twenty-four of the Psalms were first published in 1955. The same year three long-playing records of first quality were issued with another series of Psalms by the same composer.

At the end of last year the same firm (Studio S.M.) issued another long-playing record, containing Bible readings on "Abraham, Father of Believers". Some parts of the text are given special emphasis by the use of musical effects.

*

The theme for the essay competition for theological students, organised in 1956-57 by the Ligue catholique de l'Evangile, ran as follows: "On the occasion of the re-printing of the Enchiridion biblicum, the secretary and the under-secretary of the pontifical biblical commission published a joint note in which the following sentence can be found: 'Is not the Holy Scripture, for all times, the primary source and the basis of the truths of the Catholic faith, of their progress and development?' Comment on that sentence; indicate briefly some conclusions regarding the study, the reading of the Holy Scripture and its pastoral use".

■

Bibel und Liturgie, the periodical published by the Klosterneuburg monastery, which was launched in 1926 and has been mainly devoted to the scholarly approach to Bible and liturgy, last autumn started a new page in its history by giving a more 'practical' character to the periodical, the aim being to extend the biblical and liturgical movement. The three numbers issued since the change of policy show a great concern for the regular reading and study of the Scriptures by the priests; notes for expository sermons are published and notes for the preparation by lay people, as well as priests, of Bible studies.

Similarly, in the field of liturgy, hints and suggestions for a better use and practice of the liturgy on all kinds of ecclesiastical occasions are given a central place.

*

The Bible Student League of the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil, a relatively new organisation, started the publication, last year, of a periodical entitled *Review of Bible Studies*. In addition to articles and studies, the periodical also publishes bibliographical notes and news items. Among the latter is the information that the last Sunday in September shall be regularly celebrated in future as Bible Sunday. Information is also supplied about the various Bible Weeks being planned throughout the country.

In Sao Paulo alone, the league has 3,000 people registered in a Bible correspondence course, organised under the auspices of the review.

■

In Canada "La Société catholique de la Bible "(Catholic Bible Society) was formed in 1954, with the purpose of encouraging the distribution and reading of the Bible. At about the same time a new store was opened in the French district of Montreal known as "Centre de la Bible". This centre has undertaken to present a Bible to all Roman Catholics who become naturalised citizens of Canada, in the

same way that the B.F.B.S. in Canada presents Protestant Bibles to new citizens who are Protestants, and Old Testaments to those of Jewish faith.

*

In the November, 1956, issue of *Dux*, a Dutch Roman Catholic periodical, the four following ways are suggested for restoring the Bible to its place as a central element in the devotion of church members: (1) The encouragement of newly-married people to read the Bible regularly, for instance, before the midday or evening meal, with the help of a list of daily Bible readings; (2) The encouragement of Bible reading in those groups which are particularly concerned with the spiritual life of the family; (3) Having the sermon occupy a more important part in the church service; (4) Maintaining a closer contact with young adults through discussion groups and by means of appropriate visual aids in Bible study—the dramatising of particular Bible sections so that they become alive to those taking part, followed by discussion.

*

The following recommendations appeared in *Bibel und Liturgie*, the periodical of the Austrian monastery at Klosterneuburg, in its last but one issue:

There should be no church circle, no meeting of priests or of laymen, without at least a short reading and explanation of the Scriptures....

As long as we have no Bible Sundays officially prescribed by the bishops, we ought at least once a year to call people to purchase and read the Bible. (And in such a way that the Bible is also at the same time easily obtainable.)

On every opportunity which is offered, Bibles should be given or their purchase encouraged: at confirmation, preparation for marriage or at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony (the Bible is a household book!), or in recognition of service. Experienced priests at confession set the purchase or the reading of the Bible as a penance.

There should be at least one evening a week of Bible study in every parish.

*

The regulations in force at the present time, as laid down in the Codex Juris Canonici, regarding the printing and publication of the Bible, are as follows:

Can. 1391: Translations of the Holy Scriptures into the vernacular may not be printed unless they have been pronounced suitable from the Holy See, or unless they are produced with the full knowledge of the Bishop and are provided with annotations mainly from the Church Fathers or taken from the works of Catholic scholars.

Can. 1399: forbids editions of the original texts and of the old catholic translations of the Holy Scriptures, also those of the eastern church, which have been produced by non-Catholic publishers; the same applies to Scripture translations produced or published by them in any language.

Can. 2318: lays down—authors or publishers who cause the books of Holy Scripture or notes or commentaries on them to be printed without the necessary permission, are subject to immediate ex-communication.

*

The following note is taken from *Bibel und Kirche* (the organ of the Catholic Bibelwerk):

With many of us there is an extraordinary inconsistency between Bible theory and practical Bible work. On the one hand we teach and preach that the Bible contains the Word of God, that Christ is present among us

not only in the Sacrament but also in His Word, but on the other hand we are afraid of following the consequences of this truth. In reality one has to say: If the Holy Scripture contains God's Word, then we must do everything possible to make it accessible to the people, not only through sermons which are often so little imbued with the spirit of the Bible, but more widely, through an extensive practical Bible work, which at the same time is the best means of protecting our organisations, especially the youth organisations and Catholic Action, from the vacuum of the technical age and infusing them with an apostolic spirit.

News From All The World

Argentina

Sr. J. Mulder, one of the team of first trainees of the Penzotti Institute, has now started his activity in Cordoba, Argentina. Dr. Ivan Nothdurft and Sr. Perez, of the Agency's headquarters, introduced Sr. Mulder to the churches of the area last autumn. Since that time he has been working with the laymen of many local churches, organising with them various programmes of Scripture distribution. The experiments thus made have been most encouraging and more requests for help are being received than can be met.

Parallel to this development women's work has been organised on a more definite pattern. In Buenos Aires a strong Women's Auxiliary has been created, which held a large meeting for prayer and dedication for all the women of the churches on Bible Sunday last December. A Council of forty and a Standing Committee have been elected, which will prepare and be responsible for the programme and activities of the Auxiliary.

Belgium

More Bibles and Testaments were sold in Belgium in 1957 than in any previous year by the colporteurs. This is the result, report the leaders of the *Belgian Bible Society*, of the patient work of previous years. Fewer Gospels were sold but the total circulation figure for the year is up by over 4,000 in comparison with 1956.

Four-fifths of a total budget of £4,000 for the erection of the Belgian Bible Society pavilion, Expobible, at the Brussels International Exhibition, have already been collected by the small evangelical churches of Belgium: Mennonites, Brethren, Plymouth Brethren, Belgian Evangelical Mission.

Brazil

The evening newspaper *O Globo*, which has the largest circulation in the country, published recently during a period of several weeks the results of an enquiry on the theme: "Books that changed the world", in which magistrates and judges, poets and ministers of religion, students and technicians took part. The President of the Supreme Court, Dr. Orozimbo Nonato, declared, after quoting some of the books that have exercised considerable influence amongst men: "To change the world in reality—only one book has done that: the Bible".

The President of the Brazilian Press Association, referring to the enquiry, wrote of various well-known works but terminated by saying: "However, in my opinion, the books that have really changed the world are bound in one volume and have one title—the Bible. May I emphasise that I am referring to both the Old and New Testaments, with all their respective books".

Statements of this kind in the popular press, by men of such wide repute, carry great influence amongst multitudes of people and, without doubt, help to promote the sale of the Scriptures.

*

Last December the municipal government of the city of São Paulo gave space in an arcade, in the centre of that metropolis of over three million people, for a Bible exhibition organised by a Baptist minister. This exhibition was artistically presented and was open to the public daily throughout the whole month. It was visited by a very large number of people and Scripture sales were considerable, while quantities were also distributed free of charge. Foreign visitors observed with interest that Scriptures in their own mother tongue were on display, and not a few took the opportunity of purchasing copies. During the same period two series of special addresses on the Bible were arranged, the first of these being given in the Teatro Columbo and the second in the Municipal Library, made available for this specific purpose.

*

An encouraging increase in 1957 of about 40% in the local support, over the 1956 total, is reported by the *Bible Society of Brazil.* Contributions from the churches have more than doubled since 1952—a rewarding answer to the efforts and visits of the staff of the Society. Membership of the Society now totals nearly 60,000 and Scripture circulation in 1957 was over one and a half million copies.

Congo

The first year of the joint B.F.B.S./A.B.S. Agency in Congo, has been a year of some advance, writes Rev. A. W. Marthinson, the Societies' agent there. Needs have begun to be met. Printers in London and New York started work in 1956, after authorisation had been received from the various committees, and during 1957, therefore, a considerable number of books arrived and were received with great joy and satisfaction. But already there are no stocks left, as all the books were distributed within a few days of their arrival. Circulation figures are as follows: Bibles 25,121, Testaments 57,435 and Portions 125,000. In addition quite a number of Scriptures were sent direct to customers from London and New York. "But even though these figures are large", continues Rev. Marthinson, "what are they in a Protestant population of over two and a half million souls? In 1956 not less than 73,000 were added to the church in Congo alone, and many thousands more in Angola. There were another 400,000 inquirers and the same number of students in Protestant mission schools in those two countries. The Bible Societies are doing their utmost to supply an enormous number of Scriptures and the budget for 1958, which is twice that of 1957, will enable us to meet most of the needs of this great mission field".

Cuba

A special Scripture distribution campaign took place last November in Placetas, a city of 40,000 inhabitants in the centre of the island. It was the first interdenominational city-wide campaign organised by the new "director for the promotion and use of the Holy Scriptures", one of the former students of the Penzotti Institute, the Rev. O. Perdomo. One hundred and twenty six voluntary helpers co-operated in this venture and over 1,300 copies of the Scriptures were sold during the week of the campaign.

Dominican Republic

For the first time in the history of the Republic, an interdenominational "protestant parade" was held on Bible Sunday last November, in the streets of San Juan. The organisers used "an

amplifier to announce the significance of the Bible, its purpose, statements of its content, what important world figures have said about it, and so on. Posters were carried and everyone carried a Bible".

England

The production department of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, reports its director, Mr. Norman Bratt, was responsible for the printing of over 5 million Scriptures in 1957, almost three times more than in 1948. Almost two million complete Bibles, just over one million Testaments and two million Gospels were produced. The production of complete Bibles has increased fourfold since 1948. The total cost of the production amounted to nearly £820,000 as against £182,000 in 1948.

Almost five million copies of the Scriptures were despatched from London in 1957, to 58 different countries and to 47 Bible Society agencies or other Societies.

*

The Translations Secretary of the B.F.B.S., the Rev. W. J. Bradnock, reports that in 1957 the Society published first books of the Scriptures in seven languages.

First New Testaments appeared in 1957 in four languages and complete Bibles in three more. (For world figures see page 102)

*

The Home Secretary, responsible for the work of the Auxiliaries, the Rev. P. R. Thomas, reports that although Auxiliary contributions have increased from £100,000 in 1946 to approximately £140,000 in 1957, the actual purchasing power of contributions has dropped by more than £15,000 owing to the decrease in the value of the pound during that period.

*

On 7th February, the Scripture Gift Mission celebrated its 70th anniversary. That organisation was founded by Mr. William Walters of Birmingham, a printer, who in 1888 dedicated his printing machine to the printing of the Scriptures.

Germany

Last December the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thuringia issued a circular letter recommending all congregations to make sure that each young person starting his confirmation classes should have at his disposal a Bible or a New Testament. It was also suggested that each catechumen should receive a copy of the four illustrated Gospels in one volume, and newly-married couples a complete Bible with appropriate recommendations for its careful use. For the first time also congregations were instructed to celebrate Bible Sunday in 1958 on 24th August.

Greece

Mr. G. Kladis, the Bible Society Secretary in Greece, was recently visited by the Chaplain of the Greek Navy, who informed him that he hoped to be able to distribute about 10,000 New Testaments a year among his men. He had circulated 2,000 copies of the A.B.S. edition of the Sermon on the Mount at Christmas.

Hong Kong

A 5,000 edition of a pocket-size Bible was sold out within three months and half of a 5,000 edition of an illustrated magazine edition of Mark within six months of publication. The diglot New Testament (Union Kuoyu-Revised Standard Version) published last year is also proving very popular. A specially bound copy was presented to Sir A. Grantham, Governor of Hong Kong and Patron of the Hong Kong Bible Society auxiliary at a Farewell Presentation at Government House last December.

A small edition of the pulpit Bible in Chinese was issued last autumn at $25 per copy, in a black and gold

binding with clear, bold characters. Three hundred copies were printed, a hundred bound and about 80 have already been sold.

*

Over 6,000 Russian Bibles have been presented to Russian evacuees from North China. The last presentation to a convoy of 500 of them took place last autumn.

India and Ceylon

Mr. P. Mahanty, General Secretary of the *Bible Society of India and Ceylon*, reported at the annual meeting of the Society's Executive that nine new auxiliary branches had been opened in 1957, bringing the total up to seventy-seven. Nearly 900 voluntary workers are serving on these and other committees of the Society, more than twice as many as in 1954. The number of church women's groups that have agreed to interest themselves in the work of the Society, distribute the Scriptures, pray and raise funds for the Society, increased by over one hundred last year to a total of 541. Five full-time secretaries (women) are in charge of the auxiliary women's work.

Membership of the Society has increased from 12,000 to over 15,000, which is three times more than five years ago. The target of the Society is 100,000 members. Mr. Mahanty appealed to his colleague-secretaries and to the delegates of the auxiliaries for an energetic drive towards the proposed goal. "If the Society could enlist 100,000 members", he repeated, "the problem of its annual deficit would be solved.... Is it too much to ask each member to enlist one new member before the end of the year? In view of the rapidly changing conditions, we need to take more seriously the task of increasing our membership".

*

Over 35,000 matriculates and graduates were presented with free copies of Gospels and Acts and New Testaments and Psalms last year in India and Ceylon. All matriculates and graduates in these countries are entitled to apply for such free copies of the Scriptures and this project is becoming increasingly popular. In 1955 just over 11,000 copies were requested, and in 1956 more than 15,000. In India alone there were over 380,000 matriculates and nearly 60,000 graduates last year.

*

The number of certificates issued to students in India and Ceylon who have completed the Light of Life correspondence course on the Gospel of John passed the 100,000 mark in September, 1957.

Since the beginning of the course, more than 500,000 introductory lessons have been issued to individuals, and 270,373 persons have been formally enrolled after completing the first two units. Of these, 100,193 have now completed the course.

These figures cover 17 language groups, including English. In the Tamil language course 14,620 earned their certificates, while in the Malayalam course there were 11,504.

Light of Life correspondence courses were begun in 1948 by Don Hillis, then a missionary of the Evangelical Alliance Mission in India. Another course, on the Book of Acts, is issued in ten languages.

Japan

The Rev. T. Miyakoda, General Secretary of the *Japan Bible Society*, reports the following about the work of his Society:

The Japanese are a highly literate people and they often go to the many bookshops of the country to get something to read. The Bible is becoming the book of the people and the feeling that it is a 'foreign book' is disappearing. Big daily newspapers such as the *Mainichi*, the *Asahi* and

the *Yomiuri*, which issue more than three million copies daily, never hesitate about giving space to topics on the Bible and they have been introducing the Scriptures to the public. In fact, the Bible was placed by the newspapers at the head of classical literature. Last summer an extensive article on the Bible appeared in the newspaper *Yomiuri*, the writer being a professor of Tokyo University. He recommended the Bible as a priority for any young person who sincerely wished to take a step in the knowledge of world literature. At the time of the 1957 "Reading Month" observed from the middle of October to mid-November, the weekly *Asahi* and the Sunday *Mainichi* gave special place to the Bible. The former introduced the Bible as the best seller not only in the world, but also in Japan, and recommended the easily-readable Kogotai version.

The Sunday *Mainichi* has distributed a questionnaire to thirty prominent scholars and writers, asking for a list of books to be recommended to the public. Among the questions were topics such as "What one book would you take if you were stranded on a lonely island?". Eight out of thirty replied that they would choose the Bible. The most interesting of these was the Rev. Toko Kon, a prominent Buddhist priest and at the same time a very popular fiction writer. His reason for choosing the Bible was that at present he cannot find suitable books among the Buddhist writings.

This Sunday *Mainichi* also included in its magazine the General Secretary's report to the Japan Bible Society's Executive meeting.

When Mr. Miyakoda visited Fukuoka on his way to call on the colporteur teams at work in Kyushu, three local newspaper reporters met him at his hotel and he had a chance of reporting on his visit to South America and on the work of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES. This news was published in three newspapers the next morning. He was also asked to broadcast on three radio stations on the subjects: "The Bible and Morals", "Bible Reading" and "The Bible and the Family".

Special mention should be made, in connection with this increased interest in the Bible, of the efforts of Mrs. Hanako Muraoka, Dr. Shigeru Nambara and Dr. Tadao Yanaibara. Mrs. Muraoka is a member of the Board of Directors of the Japan Bible Society and is a popular writer and frequent broadcaster. She has constantly recommended the Bible to the people in her activities. Dr. Nambara and Dr. Yanaibara, ex-president and president respectively of Tokyo University, have lectured outside of church circles on the Bible and its message for international affairs and domestic problems.

Mr. Rinzo Shiina is another who should be remembered especially with regard to the Bible cause. He is a popular writer, widely read not only in Christian circles but by the public at large. He has done much to introduce the Scriptures to the people through his writings.

Then again, Prince Mikasa's love for the Bible has done a great deal to eliminate the bad feeling that had prevailed towards the Scriptures. The newspapers published large pictures of the Prince and Princess visiting the Cambridge Literary Exhibition at the Maruzen bookstore in October last, with the caption: "Prince Mikasa looks at an ancient Bible".

Another notable figure who has contributed to the increased interest in the Bible is Shigeji Kaneko, the most popular boxing champion of the day and feather-weight champion of the Orient. He is a Christian, a regular church-goer and a reader of the Bible. Recently a film about him was shown in cinemas all over Japan and from beginning to end it was made clear

that he is a faithful reader of the Bible. This film has done much to make the Scriptures popular in Japan at the present time.

*

The first edition of a Pulpit Bible in Kogotai (1,000 copies) was issued last autumn. Before the end of the year over 150 copies had been sold.

The Japan Bible Society has also issued a new series of Scripture Portions in Kogotai, using very modern and attractive covers, with photographs on the front and back covers taken in Japan and related to some parable or other striking passage of the relevant book.

Philippines

Fifty years after the first publication of the New Testament in Cebuano, one of the major dialects of the Philippines, spoken by over four million people, the first revision of that translation has been published. Tentative editions of the Gospels were circulated during the last few years and the general approval with which they met indicated that a favourable reception could be expected for the new publication. Mr. L. C. Roble, the new translations secretary of the Philippines Agency, has been closely related to this work, which started five years ago. He was helped by a local committee and by the Rev. S. H. Waterman, an American Bible Society linguistic expert. This revised text is now to serve as a basis for the New Testament revisions pending in other Philippines dialects.

*

Two important conferences of missionaries among Chinese in the Philippines and of members of the Philippine Chinese churches took place at the end of last year, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Dr. Ralph Mortensen, Secretary of the joint Bible Society Service for Overseas Chinese.

A series of resolutions were passed which, when implemented, should ensure a strengthening of Bible Society work among the Chinese-speaking population of the Philippines. There are now 600 million Chinese living in that country.

It was suggested that the Agency should appoint a Chinese secretary, in order to maintain and develop contacts with the Chinese churches and other institutions operating among the Chinese in the Philippines, and to promote and help towards the organisation of voluntary colportage.

*

President C. P. Garcia of the Philippines was presented with a leather-bound copy of the Bible on 10th February last, in his study at the Malacanang Palace. The formal presentation was made by a delegation headed by the Rev. A. B. Taglucop, Agency secretary of the Philippine Bible House.

Expressing appreciation for the gift, President Garcia disclosed that this was his first copy of the Bible in the Revised Standard Version which, he said, "I have heard so much about". He promised to "read it and see how it compares with the King James' Version".

Like his predecessor, President Magsaysay, the new Philippine President, a Roman Catholic also, is an avid Bible reader. His addresses and utterances are often graced with Bible quotations. During his inauguration last December, he was sworn into office with his hand placed over a Bible in the tradition of American Presidents—the first to do so in the history of his country.

Taiwan

The Rev.V. Lowis, Agency secretary in Hong Kong, reports the following in connection with Bible Society work in Taiwan (Formosa):

The total distribution last year showed a considerable increase over the previous period. A total of 177,282 volumes were circulated, as compared with 107,364 in 1956. The five regular colporteurs distributed a total of 63,258 copies of the Scriptures. They each cover an area of about 2,000-3,000 square miles, containing a population of about two million each.

Bible school and theological students have done valuable voluntary colportage during their vacations. Ten students from the Presbyterian Seminary in Taiwan circulated 39,786 copies between them in a two weeks' tour.

The development of the work is due in large measure to the energy and initiative of the Rev. P. T. Lai, the Assistant Secretary. He has spoken in over 300 churches to 50,000 persons during the past year.

Gospel portions are now being printed in Taiwan, and already publications for the tribal dialects in phonetic script are being produced there. The latest version is James in Amis, the first result of the labours of the Rev. E. Torjeson of the Evangelical Alliance Mission, and his tribal committtee. They are continuing with St. Mark's Gospel. Other work is in progress amongst the mountain peoples, including Romans in Sediq and Mark in Paiwan.

On this historic occasion of the ordination of the first preachers from amongst the mountain tribes, they were each presented with a Bible by the Bible Society.

The whole of the New Testament in the revised Kuoyu Braille is being produced in Taipei by the Light Heart Braille Press. This has been made possible by a legacy from the Hill Murray Institute for the Blind in Scotland. Recordings are being made in Hong Kong of Scripture passages in Cantonese and Amoy dialects, for the purpose of producing Talking Book Records for the blind.

The New Testament in paragraph form is on the press at present, as well as the Character/Phonetic Bible (sponsored by the Chinese Phonetic Promotion Committee of the U.S.A.).

To encourage the use of Mandarin, the official Chinese language, the authorities in Taiwan have banned the use of Bibles in the romanized Amoy dialect. The hope has also been expressed that local missionaries will use Mandarin exclusively in all services of public worship.

Thailand

Reports on the progress of the work in Thailand have reached us from the Secretary in Bangkok, the Rev. M. C. Chao:

There are significant evidences of people's increased interest in the Bible. In 1957 the total circulation of Scriptures reached 498,217 copies. This sharp increase of more than 100,000 over last year's total is due to several factors: the faithfulness and loyalty of the staff of the Bible House and of the colporteurs, and the dedication and consecration of the missionaries and national Christians in communicating the Word of God to the people of Thailand. It also indicates the spiritual hunger which exists among the people during this time of political uncertainty and rapid social change.

There is also a growing awareness among the Christian community that the communication and distribution of the Scriptures is primarily the evangelistic obligation of the church and missions. As a result of the Secretary's appeal to Christian communities throughout the country, for voluntary colportage work, a number of churches have responded heartily to the call. Last year the Church of Christ in Thailand opened a new

Christian book store on New Road (the Times Square of Bangkok). Hundreds of copies of the Bible and New Testament were sold through the store on a commission basis. In addition, as a result of a special publicity venture, twenty-five leading secular bookshops in Bangkok have been selling Scriptures on a sale or return basis. It is hoped that in the years to come bookshops in leading cities throughout Thailand will be able to sell the Scriptures in this way.

There were thirty-three part-time colporteurs at work in the country.

Local giving from individuals and churches to the Bible cause has marked a steady increase, reaching a total of $700, an increase of just over 18 per cent. as compared with last year.

The work of the revision committee of the Thai Bible has progressed steadily. A tentative edition of Genesis was circulated and the committee is now working on the Prophets.

Tunisia

"The B.F.B.S. has been active in Tunisia for many years," writes Mr. L. R. Stedeford, the Society's Agency secretary in North Africa. "At present" he continues, "the Society has two colporteurs at work in the country; one is an Italian of over 20 years' service, who remained at his post at Tunis throughout the war, and the other is a young Tunisian Christian. Of all the North African territories, this is the one where there has been the greatest freedom of action for colportage and Christian evangelism generally, but it is small (population only about 3 millions) and poor. Furthermore, it is the most notable centre of Islamic culture west of Egypt and as such has a certain strategic importance for Christian missions, but in spite of many years of evangelistic effort a real native church has yet to be born."

"For this reason, Scripture distribution is essentially evangelistic, is done primarily by colportage and includes the sale of a high proportion of Portions. During the closing years of the French Protectorate, internal insecurity rather than government restriction hindered the work. With the attainment of independence in 1956 it was hoped that freedom of action would remain and that calmer conditions would prevail. For a time it looked as if this was so, and for the first time for years it was possible to do some touring with the Bible van, sent from Algiers by sea because the rebellion in Algeria made it dangerous to travel by land. The new government appeared to be progressive, repeatedly declared itself to be a friend of France and of the West, wrote Islam into the Constitution but did several things directly contrary to Islamic traditions. The missionaries and colporteurs continued their work and ran into hindrances not from the central government, but from local authorities, who spoke not at all about religious freedom (that being likewise an article of the Constitution), but much about their obligation to maintain public order among the uneducated masses who might be offended by Christian activity amongst them. Such is the situation at the time of writing."

"From the Bible Society's point of view, this gives added importance to the Trade Fairs, which in Tunisia and in Morocco are now providing some of the best opportunities of reaching the mass of the Muslim population. The B.F.B.S. has had a stand each year at the Tunis Fair, since the Fair began in 1953, and sales have risen steadily. A comparison of these sales is illuminating: in 1953 we distributed 143 Bibles, 38 Testaments, 605 Portions—a total of 786; in 1957 the figures were: 58 Bibles, 37 Testaments, 2,477 Portions—total 2,572 copies. The decrease in the sales of Bibles and the increase in that of Portions indicates that the clientele consisted far less of Europeans and far more of

Tunisians in 1957 than in 1953. This is a natural result of political independence, which led to the departure of a large number of Europeans, and seems to have produced too a certain liberation of spirits among the Tunisians, who are less suspicious of foreign propaganda. Indeed, the sales at the 1957 Fair were quite unprecedented, and do not even represent the total distribution, since a second Bible stand put up by the North Africa Mission sold another 1,391 Scriptures, of which 70 were complete Bibles. The same phenomenon is true of newly-independent Morocco, where sales of Scriptures at the Casablanca Fair in 1957 were quite exceptionally good. It is accompanied in both countries by an increase in the demand for books in classical Arabic rather than in the local dialect. It seems that national pride aspires to the use of the traditional language, in spite of the fact that its difficulties put it beyond the comprehension of the majority of the population.

"These tendencies are interesting hints of what might be achieved, given freedom of action and an atmosphere of confidence. Unfortunately economic poverty is coupled with political tension arising from Tunisia's intense interest in the war in Algeria. Active Tunisian support of the rebels in Algeria has led to a worsening of relations with France, a situation which is aggravated by recent events on the frontier."

U.S.S.R.

An edition of 10,000 Bibles came off the press last autumn in Russia. The edition was produced by the Union Council of Evangelical Baptists in Russia. It is the first edition produced by that group since 1930.

United States of America

In America, the latest census reports state that one in five Americans move each year. One of the vast areas of this moving population is the trailer camp. Realizing that these trailer camps and courts on the west coast are often overlooked and neglected, the *American Bible Society*, working through and in complete co-operation with the ministers and local churches, has purchased a Volkswagen Micro Bus Camper to speed up Scripture distribution in this area. This bus, while small, is completely equipped with living quarters for two people. In addition to the housekeeping equipment, a movie projector and screen and Bible exhibit have been included.

A young seminary couple were appointed to carry on this work in the trailer camps of California. They spent from three to four days in each camp, calling from trailer to trailer and showing the film "Our Bible—How it Came to Us".

When the recently completed edition of the entire Bible in Korean Braille was received in Seoul, from the A.B.S., and the people learned that although blind, there was now a Bible they could read, there was great rejoicing by both young and old. In celebration of the event a TV show featuring this new publication was presented. While there are only 2,500 TV sets in Korea, one set was erected on the street and the show was viewed by many thousands of people.

The American Bible Society, following its annual custom of some years, produced a specially bound copy of the Gospel of John for distribution during the Easter season. The sixty-four pages were bound in a colourful cover of light blue, white and yellow, the words "He is Risen" predominating. The Gospels, furnished at the regular price of two and one-half cents each, have been becoming increasingly popular with ministers, Sunday-school teachers, chaplains, business men and others, who use this Gospel as a special Easter greeting.

Thousands of copies are placed each year on the breakfast trays of patients in hospitals.

*

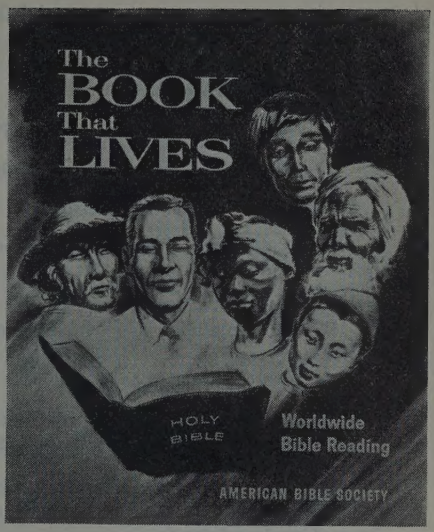
Universal Bible Sunday has been promoted by the American Bible Society for more than three decades. The reading of the Bible is stressed in many thousands of churches throughout the United States. During the weeks before Bible Sunday, commercial concerns offer window space for special exhibits of Bibles; libraries feature books on religious reading with special attention called to the Bible; churches arrange Bible exhibits, featuring interesting family Bibles that may belong to members of the congregation; each year the day-long reading of the Bible is reported from churches; this year such a programme was reported from White City, Kansas, where the reading of the New Testament was featured in the Methodist church there.

*

"The Book that Lives" is the theme that has been chosen for 1958 by the American Bible Society for its World-wide Bible Reading programme, from Thanksgiving to Christmas. This year will be the fifteenth annual observance of this reading programme. The poster reproduced below has been retained for this year's display. It is available without text.

*

A newly designed Wayside Gospel Dispenser is being used by the district offices of the A.B.S. The dispensers have been placed on store counters and in other public places. They contain New Testament Portions in both the King James and Revised Standard Version. These dispensers may be secured by individuals and organisations who want to make the Gospel available to non-church goers. One of the first orders received by the Society's office in Richmond, Virginia, came from a plumbing and heating contractor, who ordered 2,000



Portions and ten dispensers. He repeated this order in two weeks, reporting good co-operation in his placing the holders in stores and other places visited by the public.

*

An edition of 166,000 copies of the illustrated Gospel of Mark in magazine form, in the revised Spanish Valera version, has been produced. This is the first complete book of the Bible published in that revised text.

Venezuela

In advance of the evangelistic campaign to be led by Dr. Billy Graham in Caracas, 100,000 Gospels of John are being distributed. The Bible Society Agency secretary there, the Rev. K. Bystrom, is Chairman of the Literature Committee for the campaign and will direct the distribution of the Gospels. It is Mr. Bystrom's hope that all the churches of Caracas can be engaged in the distribution effort and that the programme can move forward zone by zone with each church responsible for an area assigned to it.

HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL

United Bible Societies

The following information has been prepared on behalf of the U.B.S., by Miss Margaret Hills, Librarian of the A.B.S.:

As at the end of December, 1957:

Languages in which the whole Bible has been published	215
Languages in which a complete Testament has been published..	269
Languages in which at least a Gospel or some other whole book has been published	643
TOTAL languages in which some part of the Bible has been published	1,127

The complete Bible has now been published in *Kamba* (Kenya), *Lakher* (Assam), *Ndau* (Rhodesia), *Tigrinya* (Eritrea) and *Tumbuka* (Nyasaland).

The whole New Testament has been published for the first time in *Central Chuana* (Bechuanaland), *Habbe* (French W. Africa), *Kilega* (Congo), and *Truk* (Caroline Islands).

Scriptures were published for the first time in:—

Amis	Formosa	James	Hongkong Bible House
Avikam*	Ivory Coast	Mark	B.F.B.S.
Aztec of the Isthmus	Mexico	Mark	A.B.S.
Aztec: Guerrero	Mexico	Mark	A.B.S.
Beti	Cameroons	Gospels, Acts	A.B.S.
Chuana (Tswana) Central	Bechuanaland	Matthew	B.F.B.S.
Chuj	Guatemala	Mark	Mission
Cuicatec	Mexico	1/2 Peter	A.B.S.
Daphla	Assam	Mark	B.S.I.C.
Iraqw	Tanganyika	John	B.F.B.S.
Macedonian	Yugoslavia	Gospels	Private
Matakam	Cameroons	Mark	B.F.B.S.
Otomi of the State of Mexico	Mexico	Mark	A.B.S.
Pocomchi	Guatemala	Mark	A.B.S.
Popoluca: Sayula	Mexico	Mark	W.B.T.
Tepehua	Mexico	Mark	A.B.S.
Totonac: Northern	Mexico	Mark	W.B.T.
Yuracaré	Bolivia	Mark	New Tribes Mission

There are some eighty or more languages, many of them previously listed*, in which short passages or collections of passages have been published, but in which no complete book of the Bible has appeared.

Personalia

The **Rev. Dr. Gilbert Darlington,** treasurer since 1920 of the American Bible Society, has retired from that office. He will continue his services to the Society as investment officer.

Dr. Darlington was also in charge of the Society's publishing work, in addition to the administration of its finances, the investment of its funds and the supervision of its properties. During his administration, the Society published, imported and issued a total of 360,000,000 volumes of Scriptures, about two and a half times the total of the preceding 105 years. Dr. Darlington initiated the improvements in the appearance of pocket Gospels published by the Society and thus increased their circulation greatly. One of his most recent contributions was the development of Gospels and other New Testament portions in magazine format, with profuse illustrations.

Dr. Darlington's duties are now shared between two former assistants of his, **Mr. Charles W. Baas** as A.B.S. Treasurer, and **Mr. J. B. Macbeth** as Superintendent of Publications.

*

Dr. James K. Quay, retired vice-president of Princeton Theological Seminary, has been appointed to promote the new Life Income Agreement programme of the A.B.S.

Dr. Quay has had wide experience in the field of annuities and the life income gift and is qualified to advise the prospective donor as to the type of gift best suited to his particular financial situation.

*

As from 1st October, 1957, the **Rev. Jalmari Suomela** has been serving as General Secretary of the Finnish Bible Society. The **Rev. Martti L. Parvio** will, however, continue to act as foreign secretary of the Society, and correspondence from other countries should continue to be addressed to the Finnish Bible Society at their address: Yliopistonkatu 29a, Turku, Finland.

*

Dr. Martin Diehl, the son of Dr. E. Diehl, Director of the Stuttgart Bible Society, has been appointed assistant to his father. Dr. Diehl studied at Heidelberg University where he passed his Ph.D. "summa cum laude".

*

The Hungarian Bible Council has appointed a part-time Home Secretary, the **Rev. Dr. G. Groó,** a Lutheran minister. **Dr. R. Bódoky,** a Reformed pastor, will act as administrative secretary of the Council. **Prof. Dr. L. M. Pákozdy** has been appointed honorary General Secretary. Professor Pákozdy is also secretary of the Old Testament Revision Committee.

*

Sr. H. T. Marroquin has retired from the secretaryship of the Mexico Agency, in which he served for 38 years.

*

Mr. J. C. F. Robertson, formerly of Tokyo where he represented the A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. as Associate Secretary for Japan and Korea, has now taken up residence in Hong Kong, where, in addition to becoming Senior Secretary of the Hong Kong Agency (for the A.B.S., B.F.B.S. and N.B.S.S.), he will act as "counsellor and friend" of the Bible Society secretaries in East and South-East Asia.

*

The **Rev. James A. Weeks** has been appointed secretary of the Bible Lands Agency North, in succession to the late **Mr. Lyman McCallum.** Before his call to the ministry in the Nazarene Church, Mr. Weeks had experience in accounting and office management with several firms.

*

The President of the Board of Managers of the Bible Society of Brazil, **Bishop Cesar Dacorso Filho,** has been appointed Honorary President, his place in active office having been taken by the the **Rev. Dr. Benjamin Moreas.**

*

The Belgian Bible Society has appointed the **Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Lutjeharms** as Assistant General Secretary from April 15th. His special responsibility will be to intensify the work of the Society in the Flemish-speaking part of the country and to make more effective contacts with the churches in that area. Dr. Lutjeharms was formerly a pastor at Courtrai-Roulers and at Antwerp.

*

Mr. A. L. Haig retired from the B.F.B.S. staff at the end of March, after 38 years with the Society. During this period of service, which included being secretary for Central Europe and the Baltic States, a District Secretary in Britain (during the war) and later European Field Secretary, he gained a unique knowledge of conditions and personnel of Bible Society work on the continent of Europe.

*

The **Rev. Noel Slater** who gave part-time help in connection with the Survey of Overseas Fields which the B.F.B.S. has been conducting, under the direction of **Sir Arthur Dixon,** terminated his service at the end of 1957. The survey, which began in July 1955, later became related to the U.B.S. study of Scripture "needs and supplies".

Bible Illustration Competition

IN RELATION WITH THE Third Jubilee of the National Bible Society of Scotland and with the U.B.S. Conference on Bible Illustration to be held in the summer of 1959, in Edinburgh on that occasion, a Bible Illustration Competition has been organised. The following conditions have been laid down for the "open competition", in which any artist anywhere in the world may take part:

The Directors of the National Bible Society of Scotland offer prizes for original illustrations of biblical themes in the following groups, open to all—

Group A1 : One black and white drawing illustrating any one of the following passages of Scripture: (i) II Kings 23, verses 1-3, (ii) Psalm 23, (iii) Matthew 26, verses 14-16, (iv) Matthew 28, verses 16-20 ;

Group A2 : ditto, but a coloured drawing ;

Group A3 : A two-colour cover design for any one of the Gospels ;

Group A4 : A full-colour cover design for any one of the Gospels ;

Group A5 : A poster in full colour with the theme 'The Bible in the World to-day'.

The following rules will apply:—

A. Cash prizes, made available by a number of Bible Societies and publishing firms, will be awarded to the winners in each Group, £50 for the first, £25 for the second and £15 for the third. Judging will be carried out by a representative Panel of Judges, who may also award a number of additional prizes and/or honourable mentions to competitors whose entries appear to merit such recognition. The Judges' decision will be final. Those who submit drawings of particular merit may be invited by interested publishing firms to consider a possible contract to prepare sets of illustrations for Bibles or other publications.

B. Drawings should be forwarded to the Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland at 5, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, Scotland, so as to arrive not later than 31st March, 1959.

C. In Groups A1 to A4 drawings should not be smaller than 8in. × 10in. or larger than 16in × 20in. In Group A5 posters should be approximately 24in. × 30in.

D. All prize-winning drawings, and a selection of others, will be included in an Exhibition of Bible Illustrations to be arranged during the Edinburgh Festival of Art and music in August and September, 1959, and thereafter in Glasgow. All drawings will remain the property of those submitting them and will not be reproduced without permission.

Various Bible Societies have already expressed their interest in the effort, which is mainly intended to encourage more artists to work on biblical themes.

A similar competition for school children has also been arranged in Scotland.

Contributors to this issue

HERR KARL UHL is Superintendent of the Austrian Bible Committee.

The REV. DR. ALFRED MÜLLER is Secretary of the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany and of Bibelmission in Germany.

PROF. DR. D. DEDEN is Professor of biblical science at the Great Seminary of the priests of the Holy Heart at Hees (Nr. Nymegen), Holland and author of a commentary on the Minor Prophets and of a monograph on the messianic prophecies.